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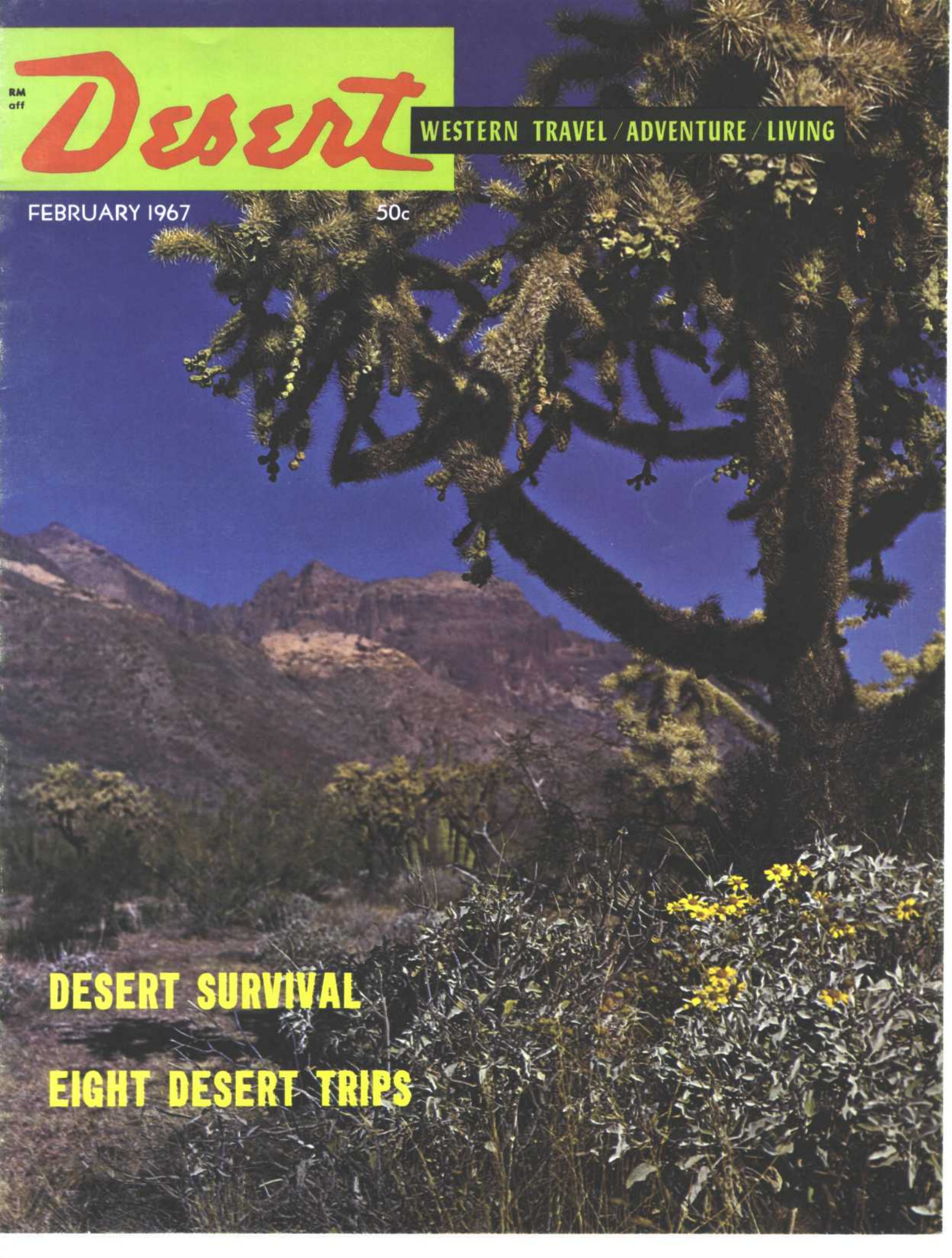
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Color Photographs for Desert

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Staff Artist

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Rose Holly
Circulation

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Business

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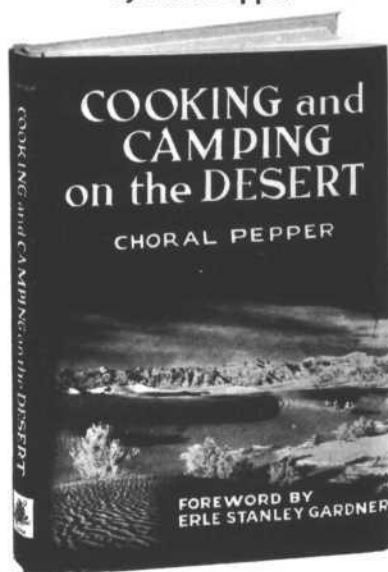
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New Books for Desert Readers

BOOT HILL

By Lambert Florin

With photos and lively stories about the dead who rest in historic graves of the old West, this sixth ghost town book of Lambert Florin is consistent with his great talent for story telling and fine photography. The endsheet drawing of Julie Bulette's grave at Virginia City, rendered by Dr. David C. Mason, is superb.

This previously untouched aspect for collecting history has revealed startling information which, in more than one case, might prove formerly accepted ideas wrong. For instance, an inscription on a monument in the Old Pioneer Cemetery at Salem, Oregon gives credit to Capt. Charles Bennett for discovering gold in the California's Sierra, ignoring other documentation accrediting James Marshall with the distinction.

Burial customs of the different tribes of Western American Indians are described, as well as mysterious mass burials, and mummification occurrences.

Tracking down the story behind the corpses which lay in graves found in remote places, as well as those with interesting inscriptions in cemeteries, turned into such a fascinating job of sleuthing that Florin has herein produced his best book of the series, even though this reviewer has said in the past the others couldn't have been better. Lambert Florin is without a doubt the most dedicated and the best of our ghost town writers today and his fine books will grow more valuable each year, as these tangible vestiges of history disappear. Large format, hardcover, 200 pages, \$12.95.

CALIFORNIA GOLDEN TREASURES

By Charles Peters

This title might be a bit deceptive, unintentionally, as the area covered is the Mother Lode country and not the California desert. Taking the areas district by district, the author has recorded by chronological sequence all reports of gold strikes, how they came about and the result, when there were results. There is information on old placer mining methods and although this isn't any guided tour to lost mines, hobbyists in that field will find something to tie into. Paperback, 157 pages \$3.00

SAN DIEGO BACK COUNTRY 1901

By Gordon Stuart

This book was printed with hand-set type by its author. It has a bit of the old and a bit of the new with many historical photos from private collections. This is a fun book of personal recollections related especially to the days when the author and his family rode the four-horse stage from Escondido to San Diego. It is salty and fresh. He tells about the day when autos first came into use and aristocratic dames of San Diego would brag, "Lost Sondag we motahed around the Bay," while in the horse and buggy days they could have said, "We horsed around the Bay."

This is the sort of book you'll read in spurts. It is full of local color and nostalgia for the days of Lydia Pinkham, button shoes and shivarees. Researchers will find some good dope in it. Poway, Julian, Escondido, Vallecitos, Fallbrook, and other back country spots of San Diego are covered. Plastic cover, 241 pages, limited printing. \$5.00.

Books reviewed may be ordered from the DESERT Magazine Book Order Department, Palm Desert, California 92260. Please include 25c for handling. California residents must add 4% sales tax. Enclose payment with order.

THE ALL DISCOVERED AMERICA

By Charles Michael Boland

Although this book does not cover desert areas, it will be of great interest to those who have fun with archeological and historical items which suggest the arrival of explorers prior to Columbus. In this book, Mr. Boland includes Phoenicians, Romans, Chinese, Irish, Scotch, Welsh and Portuguese among those who left evidence, such as runic stones which have caused hot words among archeologists, Roman implements in the bog iron of Virginia and various indications of Phoenician travel to our shores. It is a fun book, with positively presented evidence and plenty of fodder for controversy. Hardcover, 384 pages, \$4.95.

AUSTRALIANS AND THE GOLD RUSH

By Jay Monaghan

New facets of the two gold rush stories are revealed in this account of the Australians who followed gold to California, some of whom arrived before the overland '49ers, and of the Australians and Americans who reversed the direction of the California rush by striking it rich in Australia. Neglected by historians, this bright piece of business reconstructs the Australians' experiences in crossing the Pacific in frail sailing vessels and settling in booming San Francisco, Stockton, Sacramento and Marysville.

After learning to pan gold along the Mother Lode, a few returned down under and started a gold rush that outdid the '49ers stampede. Americans participated in this second rush and contributed much to the governmental reforms, including the introduction of the secret ballot, which have served as models for the rest of the world.

The book is fast-paced and colorful and brings alive the age of the sail when records for speed were established during this race to California's gold. Hardcover, 317 pages, \$6.50.

CHALLENGE TO SCIENCE, THE UFO ENIGMA

By Jacques and Janine Vallee

With each case thoroughly documented and most supported by personal interviews with the witnesses, these authors present a penetrating study of the "flying saucer" legend from Biblical times to 1964. Astronomer J. Allen Hynek, who wrote the foreword, has acted as scientific consultant to the U. S. Air Force on unidentified flying objects for 18 years. In his opinion, the subject should not be dismissed as mere nonsense. It is to create

an interest in further exploration of the UFO phenomena that the writers have prepared this book. It avoids the "nut-fringe," concentrating upon significant sightings made by reputable individuals of known integrity, such as airline pilots and astronomers. It is interesting that similar sightings have been described throughout the world by scientists who, in the 1800s, thought they were slow moving meteors. Since then, astronomical knowledge has advanced to a point where we know the descriptions could not have been bolides, but were probably some form of UFO. Although the author is a mathematician and astronomer, consultant to the Mars-Map Project, and his wife, Janine, is a psychologist and data analyst, they have presented the material in a readable style and in such a way that those interested in the UFO enigma from a practical, rather than sensational, point of view will find much food for thought. Hardcover, 267 pages, \$5.95.

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Originally authored by Hoover, Rensch and Rensch, this is the only complete guide to the historical landmarks of California. With maps, photographs and landmarks of both the historical and the modern era included, it presents the material with a lively text. Surprisingly enough, it also includes the prehistoric. The painted rocks of Poway in San Diego are described, as are the cave paintings of Santa Barbara region, Bishop, and petroglyph and pictograph sites in other desert areas. The capsule history contained with each heading is far more detailed than is usual in this sort of book. We very highly recommend it. Hardcover, large format, 639 pages, \$10.00.

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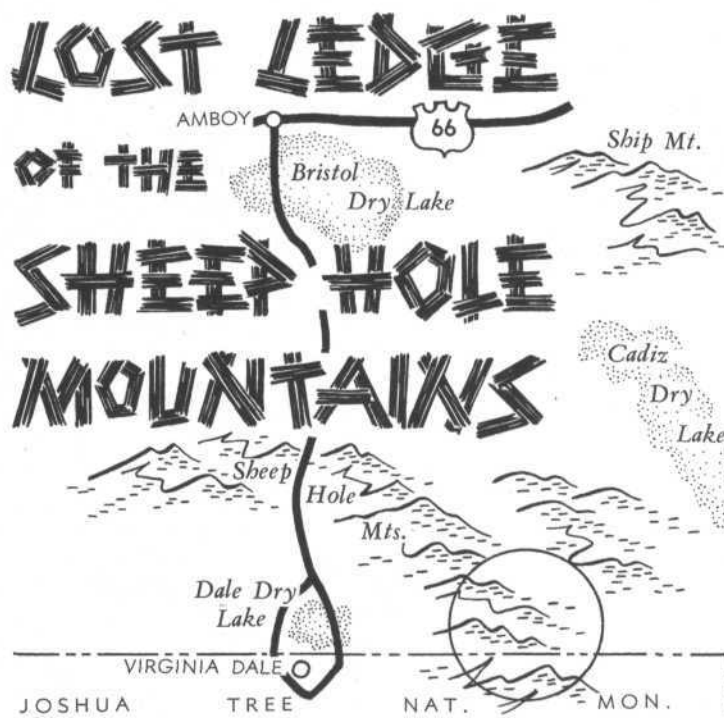
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By reader request DESERT Magazine will reprint a series of articles written by the dean of lost mine yarns, John Mitchell, which appeared originally in 1940 and 1941.

by John D. Mitchell



MOST LOST mine stories leave the reader with the impression that the richest mines were found and lost in wild Indian country by old prospectors with long whiskers. The wilder the Indians and the longer the prospector's or Desert Rat's whiskers, the richer the mines seem to be. Western lore is replete with lost mine and buried treasure stories, some of which, no doubt, have grown in magnitude as time elapsed. Most traditions become distorted in time. The Lost Ledge in the Sheep Hole Mountains seems to be an exception to the rule. The old prospector had plenty of whiskers, but there were no wild Indians.

Early one summer morning about 50 years ago old Pete Ring, John Lock, storekeeper; Jim Walsh, section foreman; Bill Pine, Santa Fe station agent; and the writer were standing on the depot platform at Amboy, California. A group of strange objects were seen bobbing up and down on top of the heat waves that hung over the dry lake northeast of the station. The lake bed had filled with clear water and the dancing heat waves had lifted everything high into the warm air above the ground. Even old Pete Ring's mine that stood on a small brown hill near the eastern edge of the lake seemed to be high up in the clouds with fairy palaces all around it. As we stood looking at the strange objects dancing around in the shimmering mirage, Pete Ring remarked, "Hell, that's Hermit John and his outfit."

By the time Hermit had reached the western edge of the mirage his outfit was down on the ground again and he was heading for the Santa Fe depot.

While the Hermit was very secretive about his business, he was by no means a total stranger to the few residents of the little desert railroad station. This was the third time he had shown up at the store and railroad station. Despite the fact that the tall white whiskered man rode a large mule, his feet almost dragged the desert sands. The heat waves had made him look much taller as he rode across the dry lake bed. After unloading six sacks of ore on the depot platform Bill Pine, the station agent, told him that one of the sacks was badly torn and that he could not receive it for shipment in that condition. The old man returned to his pack outfit and brought another sack. When the torn sack was emptied out on the depot platform it almost started a stampede. The ore was a light gray iron-stained quartz literally plastered and matted together with bright yellow gold. Everyone crowded around to see the ore. Pete Ring exclaimed, "Jumping John D. Rockefeller, that's the richest ore that ever came out of the California desert."

The old man gathered the ore up quickly, putting it in the new sack, weighed it and had the agent bill it to a San Francisco smelter. Some very rich gold ore was being hauled into Amboy at that time from a gold mine at Virginia

Dale, operated by some Armenians from Los Angeles, but it was an entirely different kind of ore. While it showed considerable free gold, it was nothing to be compared with that brought in by the Hermit.

After watering his five burros and saddle mule at the tank car on the Santa Fe tracks, the old prospector went into camp just behind the little grocery store and near the railroad tracks. We all naturally wanted to know where the ore came from, but the old man was secretive and did not volunteer the information. In those days it was not considered good etiquette to inquire too closely into a stranger's personal affairs—especially if he happened to have a large six shooter handy.

The Armenian freighter told us the old prospector had been seen around their camp on several occasions and that they understood he was prospecting somewhere in that part of the desert. Later that evening the writer visited the old fellow around his campfire and found him reading the Psalms of David aloud from a large leather-covered bible which he carried in his outfit.

He was worried because the other Desert Rats had seen his rich ore. He was afraid they would try to follow him to his mine.

He told me that while prospecting in the Sheep Hole Mountains northeast of Dale dry lake and southwest of Cadiz

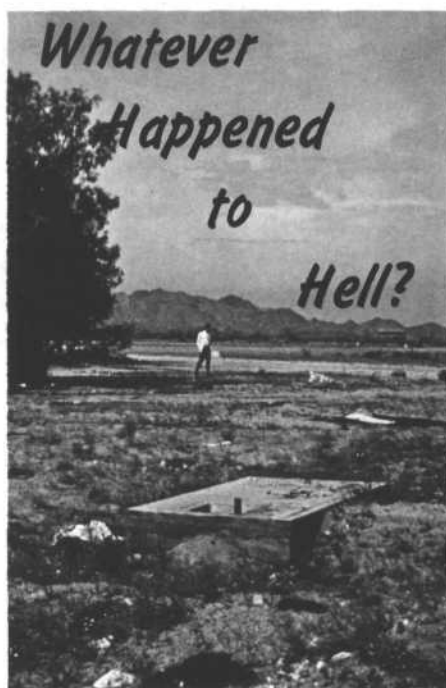
dry lake, he had found an old Spanish or Mexican mine that showed evidence of having been worked hundreds of years before. An old arrastra nearby showed that the ore had been treated on the ground. However, there was no water other than a caved shaft near the arrastra that might have been a well. Two or three old graves nearby indicated that the former operators, or at least, some of them, had been killed or died there. Old-time mining tools were scattered around.

During our conversation it developed that we had something in common. We were both from Kentucky. We proceeded to celebrate the occasion with a small nip or two from a bottle of Snake Medicine I happened to have in my hip pocket. After some talk the old man told me that he had done considerable prospecting around the desert, but that old Spanish shaft was the only deposit he had ever found that amounted to anything. The ore, he said, was enormously rich and there was enough in sight to make him wealthy beyond his fondest dreams. His description of the place would locate it either in the northeast corner of the Joshua Tree National Monument, or just across the line to the west. This area recently has been deleted from the Monument boundaries.

During our conversation the prospector told me he had done some prospecting around a large outcropping of iron ore to the north of his mine, but that it was too lowgrade in gold to pay expenses of transportation and treatment.

Early the following morning when the Santa Fe passenger train pulled into the station the old fellow was observed to drop a letter in the slot of the mail car. The next morning, after watering his saddle mule and five burros he packed up, filled his numerous water kegs and followed one of the Armenian freight wagons out of town. No one ever saw or heard of him again. The letter probably instructed the smelter to mail the returns to some other postoffice or to family or friends in the east. He was never seen around Virginia Dale or any of the other railroad stations along the Santa Fe.

This happened many years ago, and as far as the writer knows no one has ever found, or even looked for the Lost Ledge of the Sheep Hole Mountains. The Hermit probably met the fate that has befallen many others on the desert wastes of the Great Southwest and his bones lie covered with drifting sands. If the original operators were killed by bandits or Indians they probably left some treasure buried in or around the small rock house, the ruins of which still stand there. □



by James Wallace

"THIS IS HELL . . . Hot, isn't it?" was posted on a sign at the outskirts of Hell, California, a town whose name caused a storm of protests from Puritan tourists who found it to be an objectional reminder of what might be their fate. A protest reached national proportions not more than half a dozen years ago via the lines of the Associated Press. But this did not daunt the brave inhabitants who knew what they were talking about. They remained firm in their refusal to change the name, for Hell was just that; the hottest place in the United States, the closest thing to what man has imagined Hell to be.

However, there is no scorn as devastating as a freeway's scorn in California. The State Highway Department accomplished what the puritans could not; it wiped out Hell—lock, stock and rock shop—angling their four lane, super highway from Indio to Blythe right through the center of town.

Two or three hundred people and several thousand scorpions, along with several mean rattlesnakes, had to find another place to live. They disappeared into the desert as quietly as their town disappeared.

There is a rumor though, wafted on the hot, dry desert wind, that Hell will relocate; that even now the die hard Hellites are looking for a place to raise their city once again—not to be a memory, nor a thing of scorn, but a humorous fact away from freeways and their devastating scorn. □

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TEMPEST IN SILVER

by Stanley Demes



TODAY'S TRAVELER to Panamint sees a crazy quilt of bare foundations and ramshackled walls. He marvels, too, at the old brick mill which for almost 100 years has challenged decay and oblivion. But it is not what he sees that affects the traveler; it's what he feels. As he stands on the road looking up Surprise Canyon which nestles unpretentiously on the Western slope of the Panamint Range, about 10 miles south of Telescope Peak, the years roll back. Breezes echo gruff, untutored voices, and there is a raucous clang as the 20-stamp mill's witchery produces precious silver ingots for shipment to "Frisco," fabled financial capitol of the 70s. The lizard on the big granite boulder is unimpressed that a bearded miner's pick lay on this same rock many years ago. And now, one looks vainly on the old dirt road for tracks of heavily-loaded desert burros. They're gone just like the silver city herself.

The story of Panamint probably began in 1859 with the discovery of the Comstock lode. On this date a silver fever began which swept the United States and was especially "fatal" in the Western frontier where curiously every man was a modern day Jason tirelessly searching for his kind of fleece. But after 1859 many frontier men thought of just one thing—to trek the unknown for silver.

William T. Henderson was such a man. Spurred on by the silver news emanating daily from the Comstock, and from legends of the enormously rich lost Gunsight mine, the bearded prospector coaxed his burro across colorful Death Valley. With him were S. P. George and Indian George. S. P. George was weaned on the old gunsight lore. Indian George had long since discarded the ways of the redman and made the hopes of the white-man his own.

These three dreamers in 1860 skirted the flaming cliffs on the west side of Panamint Mountain. While Henderson found nothing to satisfy his thirst for silver, there was something about the ancient granite and metamorphic rocks of Pan-

amint escarpment that promised wealth untold. So, he returned. This time with a legendary adventurer named William Alvord, a sourdough named Jackson, and the ever faithful Indian George. Again Henderson's dreams of wealth were stymied. He left Panamint never to return. Alvord, his partner, was more unfortunate still. In the upper reaches of Surprise Canyon he was bushwacked by Jackson and left for vultures. All these anxious probings for silver into the desolate sun-scorched Panamints were futile. Silver wasn't discovered until late in 1872 when two of the most colorful champions of the silver west, R. E. Jacobs and Bob Stewart, wandered up Surprise Canyon and found a huge fragment of rich silver ore.

The great migration to the silver diggings began. Crude buildings sprang up like mushrooms after a spring rain. The most useful Panamint edifice was, of course, the Surprise Valley Mining and Water Company's 20-stamp mill. It was finished in a matter of weeks while miners with huge stacks of ore chaffed at the bit. Good mechanics, carpenters, and millwrights got top wages of \$6 per day. Most popular, of course, were the saloons and Panamint in those days had some fine ones. Like San Francisco, Panamint had its own Palace Hotel. Its barroom was built by skilled Panamint craftsmen and had a beautiful black walnut top. On the side walls were handsome pictures of voluptuous females in varying states of *dishabille*. But Dave Neagle, the owner of this splendid saloon, was especially proud of his magnificent mirror. It was 8 x 6 feet with double lamps on each side.

Fred Yager early determined that his "Dexter" saloon was going to surpass Neagle's. Fred especially wanted the finest mirror in town. So, he sent to San Diego for a beauty. The mirror installed was to be a 7 x 12 foot sparkler. Tragedy struck, however, when an inebriated miner fell on the shimmering reflector just as it was being positioned against the wall. Sheltered in the confines of his Palace, Dave must have smiled at his

rival's sore plight—perhaps murmuring encouragingly that breaking a mirror leads to seven years bad luck.

There were two outstanding architectural omissions in Panamint. There was no jail—criminals had to be taken to Independence for incarceration. Further, though it was sorely needed, Panamint never had a hospital. On several occasions *Panamint News* editors Carr and later Harris cried out in their columns for a community hospital. Interestingly enough, the two crusading editors were mute concerning the lack of a jail.

Although it was not bruited about as such, the building owned and tastefully decorated by Martha Camp, played a significant role in the development of the new town. In Martha's care was a bevy of attractive, if overly painted, young ladies whose lives were dedicated to two things: to make money and keep miners content.

It cannot be doubted, however, that Panamint prosperity was due to its mines. The two richest were suitably entitled Jacobs Wonder and Stewarts Wonder. Assays of these two mines showed ore values ranging from \$100 to \$4,000 per ton, the average being about \$400. Stewart, a well known Nevada senator, later joined with another Nevada senator, J. P. Jones, to form Surprise Valley's biggest mining combine, The Surprise Valley Company. Stewart and Jones had other local interests. They owned the Surprise Valley Water Company and a toll road procured from grizzly Sam Tait which trailed up Surprise Canyon. Charges for ascending this road were quite nominal: \$2.00 for a wagon, 4 bits for a horseman, and 2 bits for a miner and burro.

The two editors of the *Panamint News*, at first Carr and later Harris, were rhapsodic in their faith in Panamint's ultimate prosperity. Late in 1874 the front page of the news throbbed with excitement. "There is reason to believe, the *News* stated, that a busy population of from three to four thousand souls will be in Panamint in less than a year," and later, "When we begin to send out our bullion it will be in such abundance as will cause

the outside world to wonder if our mountains are not made of silver." Harris' beginning enthusiasm must have haunted him later, for his paper of March 2, 1875 modestly informs us that "there were only 600 people at Panamint."

Despite the fact that the *Havilah Miner* proclaimed that Panamint City's silver yield would one day eclipse the Comstock, capital funneled slowly and sporadically into the silver city. Private persons mostly subsidized Panamint's mining activities. Senator Jones' faith in Panamint was shown by hard cash accumulations of partially developed mines. The Senator's brother caught the silver virus and plunked down \$113,000 for a number of claims in the Panamint district. Stock sales never boomed. One wonders if the wildly energetic silver sun of the Comstock lode were not out to eclipse a potential rival. After all, shares in the Con Virginia were flirting *a la Croesus* with the San Francisco stock exchange at the \$700 mark. More dramatic was E. P. Raine's method of seeking money for Panamint. He carted 300 lbs. of rich ore across the Mojave to Los Angeles. He staggered into the Clarendon Hotel and dumped the ore on a billiard table. Unfortunately, hotel patrons were more interested in the fact that Raine bought drinks for all than they were in the welfare of Panamint.

Probably the most popular method of getting freight to Panamint was sending goods via Remi Nadeau's Cerro Gordo Freighting Company. Remi's swaggering mule teams made daily trips from San Fernando to the Panamint mines. Remi was ever the epitome of optimism. Although untouched by such 20th Century transportation behemoths as the cross country truck and the jet cargo plane, Remi's corporate slogan was "all goods marked C. G. F. C. will be forwarded with dispatch."

But most characteristic of Panamint transportation in the early days was the solitary miner who arrived on foot followed by a heavily-laden burro. Within his hair-matted bosom slumbered the lion's share of the vigor and courage of frontier America. Courage, however, wasn't always the answer on the torrid road to Panamint. Bleached bones of unlucky prospectors sparkled all too frequently in the Mojave sun. When Panamint hearts were at their lightest and silver ore seemed to stretch like a ribbon of wealth to the center of the earth, the people of Panamint, spear headed by their grey-haired champion, Senator Jones, attempted to build a railroad from Shoo Fly (Santa Monica) to Independence. This railroad was to make Panamint the silver empire of the world. Already Eng-

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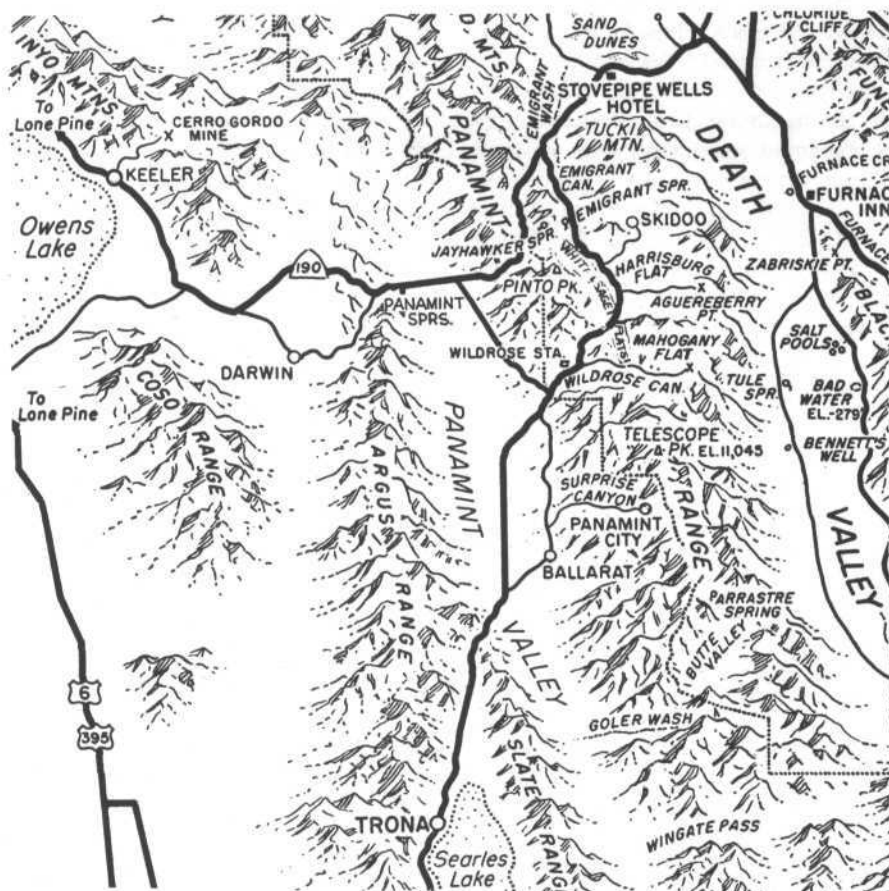
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land was being heralded as an inexhaustible market for Panamint silver. Unfortunately, however, the railroad was to remain a dream railroad. The project clashed with the wishes of the great Southern Pacific quadrumvirate of Stanford, Crocker, Hopkins, and Huntington. The proposed Shoo Fly to Independence railroad won some initial battles—Senator Jones' Chinese laborers soundly trounced a corps of General Huntington's forces in the Cajon Pass, but the good Senator lost the decisive battle for his beloved railroad in the hallowed halls of Congress. The Southern Pacific, sans Winchester, had a clear blueprint for winning the West.

Recreation for Panamint's thrifty merchants and boisterous sourdoughs centered, of course, in the city's saloons. Whiskey was excellent and surly Jim Bruce dealt in a neat hand of faro. Whether tired miners came into Dave Neagle's to ogle at pictures of nude ladies, to have a few drinks, or to chat with lovely, but garishly painted young ladies, all present usually had a good time. Rarely was there serious gun play. Once a Chinese window washer served as target for the six gun of a frolicsome and intoxicated miner, but usually life in a Panamint bar did little to disturb the city's reputation as an "orderly community." In their more gentle moments, some men attended the Panamint Masonic Lodge.

For the respectable female, recreational possibilities were severely limited. Legendary is the dance that Miss Delia Donoghue, proprietress of the Wyoming Restaurant, threw in honor of George Washington, the father of her country. To a four piece combo led by learned Professor Martin and paced by the twangs of a soused harpist, doughty men danced with 16 lovely ladies, almost the entire female population of the city.

Panamint certainly wasn't as wicked as Tombstone, but it had its share of crime. Crime in this petulant silver metropolis ranged from writing threatening letters and petty thievery to infamous murder. The anonymous letters were sent to editor Harris. They criticized his reporting of the murder of Ed Barstow, night watchman for the *Panamint News* building, by gunfighter and chief undertaker Jim Bruce. This murder took place in Martha Camp's pleasure house on Maiden Lane. Ed learned that his pal Jim was making time with Sophie Glennon who, *demi-monde* damsel or not, was his girl. He burst into the bedroom firing his six gun blindly. Jim, drawing from his wide experience in such emergencies, sighted his

Panamint ruins in 1964



target carefully and pumped two bullets into his erstwhile friend. A sentimental wrapping was given the whole affair when on his death bed Barstow confessed that he was drunk at the time and that his friend was guiltless. More sentiment was piled on when editor Harris used the crime as an excuse for moralizing on the dangers of drink.

A woman figured in one Panamint murder. Sleek Ramon Montenegro resented the words Philip de Rouche used to his comely escort. Montenegro, as lithe as a rattlesnake and with all its speed, knocked down the offender. For revenge, de Rouche later used the butt of his gun to play tattoo on Montenegro's face. However, the handsome Latin won out in the end. Panamint streets were a sea of flame for one moment as Montenegro's gun flashed and killed the Frenchman. Taken to Independence for trial by Deputy Sheriff Ball, Montenegro was tried by a Grand Jury and, although pleading guilty, was acquitted.

Panamint's most celebrated crime would probably never have been committed if Panamint were a stable community and due process of law an accepted way of righting wrongs in the silver city. A. Ashim was a respected member of the Panamint community. He belonged to the local Masonic Lodge and ran the town's largest general merchandising business. But like most town males, Ashim had a six gun and had experience using it. So, when Nick Perasich ran off to Darwin leaving behind an unpaid bill of \$47.50 at his store, Ashim walked into a Darwin restaurant. There Ashim shot Perasich three times, killing him instantly. The vendetta which resulted was not inferior to Mafia revenge killings of our day. Perasich's brothers, led by the volatile

Elias, pressed to kill Ashim. They almost succeeded. Hiding behind cornstalks along the roadside, they intercepted the stage and fired into it. Ashim escaped, but his mother received a powder burn on her nose.

But it was those wily ex-New Yorkers, Small and McDonald, who turned Panamint criminology into something resembling a comic opera. From their infamous castle nestled in Wild Rose Canyon, these disheveled silver "knights" rode their sleek chargers into clandestine rendezvous with those jolting fortresses of the West, Wells-Fargo stage coaches. Once, the wily knaves hunted for a silver mine—and found one. They had no intention of working it. As soon as they could, they unloaded the mine on Senator Stewart. Money received from the sale of the mine could not have come at a more fortuitous moment for the unholy pair. They had been apprehended by Jim Hume, Wells-Fargo investigator, for robbing the Eureka and Palisades stage. Wells-Fargo forgot to press charges when Small and McDonald turned over to them the money received from the Senator for the sale of the mine.

After their close brush with Wells-Fargo, a legend started by twinkle-eyed Senator Stewart says that the desperados kept their eye on Senator Stewart's progress with his new mine. Alarmed by the undue concern of the bandits with his property, Stewart devised a clever ruse to foil the waiting thieves. He melted ore from the mine into five silver balls weighing over 400 pounds each. When the bandits thought the time was ripe, they opened their saddle bags and pounced on the mine. Imagine their amazement at the sight of the five huge balls of silver. Legend adds that Stewart was horribly vilified by the disappointed pair for his unsportsmanlike conduct. In this case, however, legend is not correct. Remi Nadeau tells us in his book on California ghost towns that Stewart's mill fashioned five massive ingots as a precaution against theft.

The criminal activities of Small and McDonald were destined to end soon after the robbery on Harris and Rhine's store in the spring of 1876. Briefly, the brigands made nuisances of themselves around Bodie. A dispute over spoils, however, led to a heated dispute which led to gun play. John Small was not quite as fast on the draw as his partner.

Why did Panamint die? People nowadays think that the silver veins were surface-bound and did not extend to any great depth. This reasoning appears quite cogent; after all, the silver city's star did

rise and set in four short years. A contrary viewpoint, however, was expressed by Professor O. Loew who, late in 1875, was quoted as saying: "Never have I seen a country where there was a greater probability of true fissure veins than that of Panamint. In the Wyoming and Hemlock mines large bodies of ore will be encountered." But even as Loew spoke, decay burdened the wind. Editor Harris left Panamint for Darwin in 1875; Doc Bicknell followed soon after. Before Harris packed his wagon for Darwin he advanced his notion why Panamint died—the lack of road and rail transportation. Harris genuinely felt that a railroad could have saved the city.

There was another reason why Panamint became an untimely ghost town. Two hard-bitten prospectors, Baldwin and Wilson, discovered two rich mines in the nearby Coso mountains. The two miners told the people of Panamint that they had the two richest mines in the world. Panamint accepted their words and their enthusiasm as gospel. Immediately a great exodus of wagons trailed down Surprise Canyon headed for the promising capital of the Cosos, Darwin. Unquestionably the discovery of these silver mines in the Cosos provided the *coup de grace* for the already stricken city as Coso mines were

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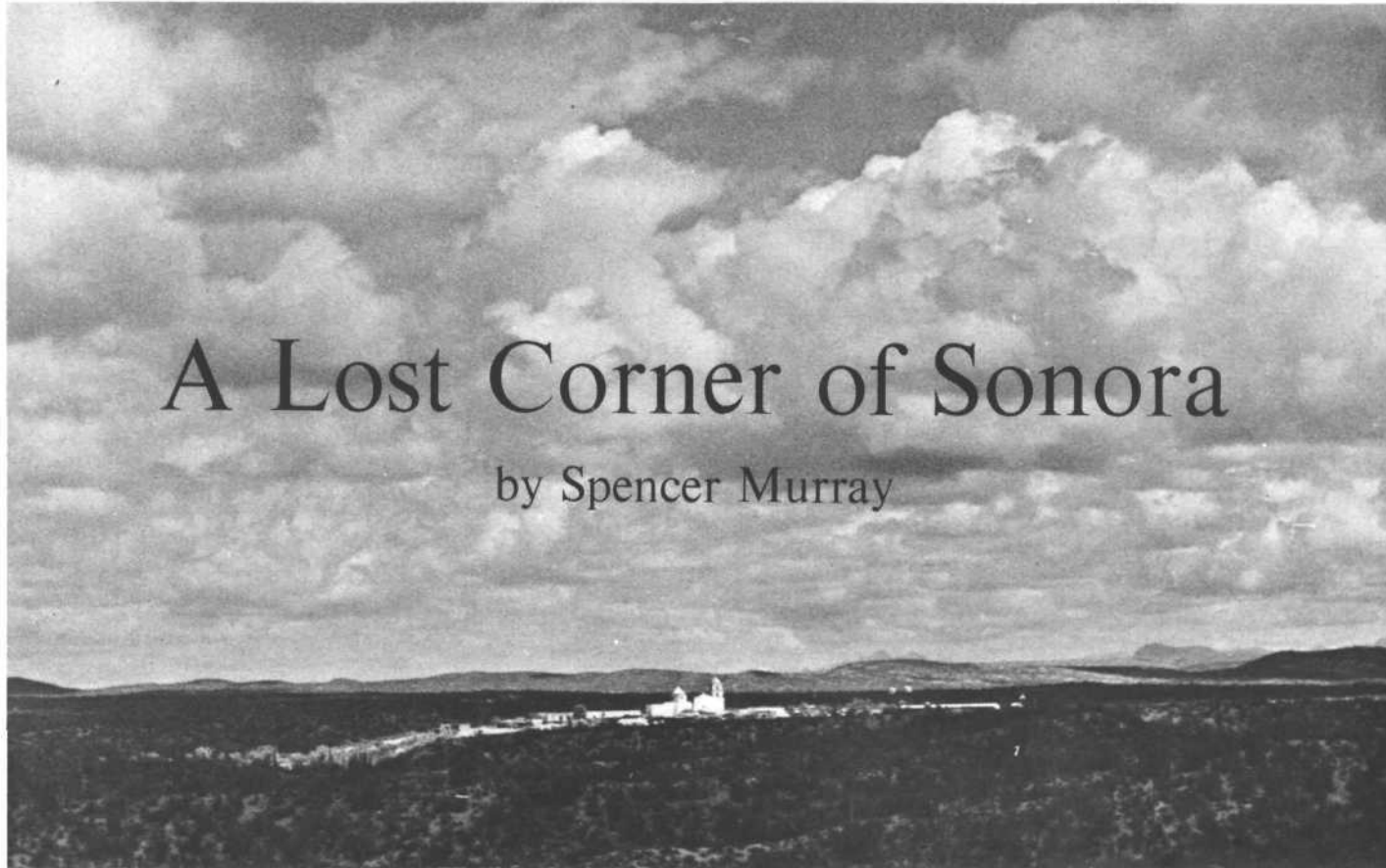
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A Lost Corner of Sonora

by Spencer Murray



The imposing edifice of the mission at Tubutama is visible atop its hill from a great distance.

“YOU CAN’T get there from here.” That, in essence, was what the grizzled Mexican had told us the year before as we stood in the dusty main street of Saric, Sonora. We had attempted to pass through Saric on our way northward to the border crossing at Sasabe at Arizona’s edge, and several maps showed that a road did, indeed, go through. But our new-found friend in Saric was adamant; there was no road northward out of the backwater village and, moreover, if there had been no one would have wanted to drive it!

Twelve months later we set out again to find the questionable Sasabe-Saric road; this time pushing southward from Sasabe itself.

“We” were John Lawlor, past editor of several national magazines, book author, and my companion in the monumental task of assembling the first complete and accurate guidebook to Sonora, Mexico’s largest state. The third member of the party was Bob Thomas, auto editor of the *Los Angeles Times* who was conducting a roadtest of a 4-wheel drive International Scout for his paper. Bob had asked us where we thought he might best put the Scout through its paces, and we had suggested the *Saric-Sasabe* region, for it was the one area we hadn’t covered.

Sasabe, Arizona, with a population of 24, faces across the border to Sasabe, Sonora with about 1,000 inhabitants. The two Sasabes lie 46 miles southward from Robles Junction, Arizona, 19 miles of which are dirt but which are regularly maintained. Another 26 miles to Tucson make the sister border towns 72 miles from a city of any size. The Sasabes exist solely as a port of entry for cattle driven to the U.S. by *vaqueros* from the sizeable ranches that dot Sonora to the west and south of Nogales.

San Luis, south of Yuma, had been our crossing point, and from there we had followed paved Highway #2 some 200 miles southeast to the roadside settlement of Los Tajitos, not far from Caborca (see accompanying map). We had been asked to look in on a relative by a Mexican friend in Los Angeles. The relative lived in El Plomo, north of Los Tajitos, a once-extensive mining town, but now with only 200 inhabitants.

Twenty-four miles separate El Plomo and Los Tajitos, the bumpy dirt road alternately crossing dry *arroyos* and jolting over earthen dikes built by ranchers to stave off the sheets of water which occasionally engulf the table-like desert during flash floods. Night had fallen before we reached El Plomo and we were sur-

prised when our headlights suddenly picked up what once constituted El Plomo’s main street. Gaunt doorways, unseeing windows and old walls in every state of decline line the avenue, but no feet padded along the stone sidewalks and we could find no one to direct us to the modest hut of Joaquin Oros, the relative of our friend back home. Jouncing ahead a mile or more, passing more crumbling remains of miner’s houses, we finally spied a dimly lit window in the distance and soon found ourselves at the Casa Jaquez, the only sort-of hostelry in town and the headquarters of the wealthy Jaquez family who own three extensive cattle ranches in the area. Someone ran to summon Joaquin Oros and over a dinner of *chorizo* we talked of the boom that El Plomo had enjoyed during the 1930s and the “road” that continued northeastward toward Sasabe.

We set out the next morning, following the directions given us by a member of the Jaquez family, rather than the dotted line that the U.S. Air Force chart indicates is the only route.

Sasabe lies in the Altar River Valley, a scar running from near Tucson down toward the Gulf of California and along which Padre Kino had developed many missions and *visitas* around the turn of the

17th century. In those days the lush valley harbored thousands of Indians and it was Kino's goal in life to convert the masses to Christianity. That this was an ambitious undertaking is evidenced by the old maps that show sketchily the Altar Valley over 250 years ago. Santa Teresa, San Bernardo Aquimuri, Busanic, Tucubavia, Ootcam and Santa Barbara are now all but forgotten, these the names of missionary outposts within present-day Sonora whose ruins have crumbled to dust and are no more to be found. At Atil and Saric vestiges remain of the old buildings, while at Altar, Oquitoa and Tubutama the ruins have been restored to something of their former grandeur and are presently in use as churches.

To shorten what would otherwise be a long tale, there *is* a road connecting Sasabe with the more southerly settlements within the lower Altar River Valley. But it is worse than poor. It's awful! It is unlikely the present trail follows the the ancient route of the *padres*. Rather, it is a series of farm roads that zig and zag between the sparsely located ranches. To find it, one must begin at E. L. Jones' border station at Sasabe, Arizona, which lies just a few yards from the fence separating the neighboring countries. Check in at the Mexican *aduanas*, or customs house, a few steps on Mexico's side of the fence. You'll need a tourist permit and a car permit to proceed southward, for the line denoting the "free zone," which wanders erratically as it vaguely parallels the U.S./Mexico frontier, reached here to the border.

Drive south down the only road leading to Sasabe, Sonora, which lies unseen from the border behind a range of low hills. When your odometer has rolled up 7/10ths of a mile you'll be confronted with a stop—rather, an *alto*—sign. Turn

left and you're on your way. From here you're on your own. You'll go from one *ranchito* to another and have to open—and make certain to close behind you!—no fewer than 17 wire cattle gates along the serpentine 34-mile road. You'll creep along steep-edged canyons, bump over stony ridges and, finally, dive into a veritable tunnel with a roof of interlocked tree branches. You can't get lost for wherever there's a fork there's a house. Each fork will consist of a "driveway" to the house, while the other branch is the correct one. No roads to anywhere take off from the Sasabe-Saric trail. A late model, conventional passenger car *may* make the journey in dry weather, but an older car with relatively high ground clearance and heavy duty tires, or a pickup truck, is the best bet. Nowhere did we have to engage the 4-wheel drive on our Scout, and we give credit for our success to its short wheelbase and high road clearance.

Nothing much remains of the mission



Santa Gertrudis de Saric, founded 13 years after Padre Kino's first visit to the four Pima Indian villages here. Like all the missions of the Altar River Valley, *Saric* flourished about 100 years then, with expulsion of the Jesuits from Mexico, it began a decline from which it never recovered. Bells said to be the original ones hang from a gallows outside the village schoolhouse. There are no traveler's facilities in Saric, though we were befriended by a curious Mexican and put up in his adobe *casa* for the night. Gasoline may sometimes be procured from the village store, and one or the other of the two *cantinas* might be open.

The way becomes easier southward from Saric. It is traveled by ranchers who use Altar as their source of supply rather than nearer Sasabe. An infrequent third class bus sometimes bangs its way between Altar and Saric, too.

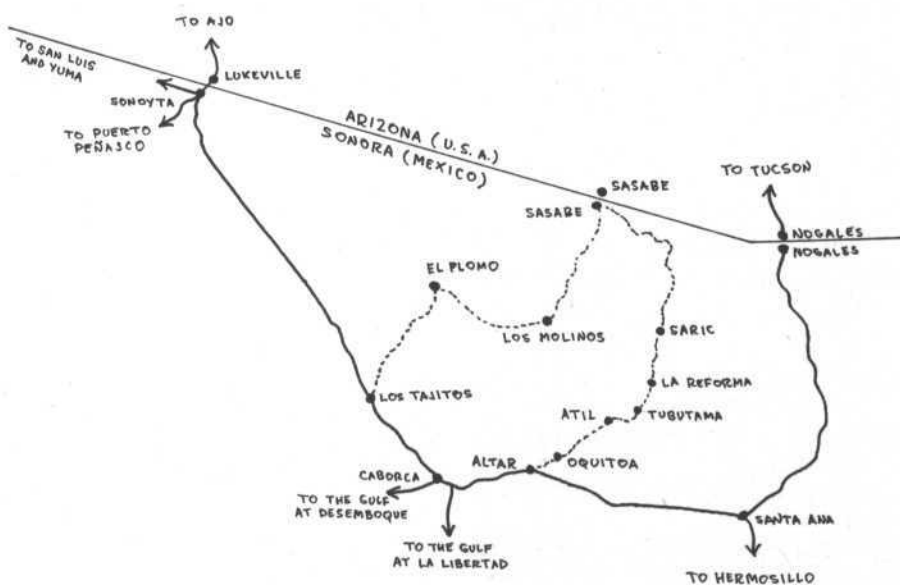
A bit over eight miles below Saric the road passes through the settlement of Cerro Prieto, a ramshackle collection of crude huts inhabited by poor farmers.

Nine-and-a-half miles further the traveler will, without forewarning, jolt into La Reforma, an agricultural community of 400 souls who seemed surprised that we, as Americans, had approached town from the north.

La Reforma, by Sonoran standards, is new. The site of neither a mission nor a Spanish outpost, La Reforma is simply a town of adobe-walled houses and a few stores where outlying ranchers come for their mail, to buy supplies, gas up their trucks and tractors and, perhaps, spend a Saturday night in one of the two *cantinas* whooping it up or playing pool, a Mexican rancher's favorite pastime.

A little way out of La Reforma the traveler will spot a towering edifice glistening in the sun atop a high knoll some miles southward. This is the restored mission at *Tubutama*, beautifully executed and still in everyday use after 270 years. Forgotten *Tubutama* is just 2.2 miles from La Reforma. The road scrambles up the conical hill on top of which the town lies and the visitor will find himself suddenly transported back to the days of colonial Mexico. Ancient windows, built high to let hot interior air escape from the tall-ceilinged rooms within, face out on the neatly kept plaza, but the mission building commands the center of attention.

Too often restorers have attempted to combine the architectural styling of old with modern touches—often with horrendous results, but with *Tubutama* they adhered to the old design as closely as they could and still keep the ancient structure



reasonably sound. However, niches that once held statues brought from Spain and the lovely cornice decorations have merely been plastered over. The padre in attendance will let you climb the belltower for a peso or two and the effort is well worth it. Moldering *Tubutama* lies at your feet and off to the south glisten the blue waters behind Presa Cuauhtemoc, an agricultural reservoir built to dam the waters of the Altar River and divert them to the ranches and farms below.

The old Tubutama-Altar road had to be diverted when the dammed waters of the presa began to flood into the valley which, at this point, is wide. The new way below *Tubutama* has not yet been softened by decades of usage and it is rough and rocky for 6.1 miles until the dam itself is reached. It then rejoins its original route and the way becomes smooth once again.

The next community in line lies about three miles below the dam. This is Atil, with a population now of a scant 200 but which was formerly of greater size as evidenced by the rows of abandoned and decaying adobes that line the many narrow, rutted streets. Again, Atil exemplifies the Mexico of a century or more ago, with the occupied houses fronted by barred windows. Wall sections of bared adobe bricks peek through where the whitewashed plaster covering has fallen away with age.

Camping in Altar River Valley is unrestricted.



Facing the plaza at Atil are the dwindling remains of the Kino mission. Just the rear wall and part of the two side walls still stand. Beyond restoration, the mission's loss left Atil without a suitable house of worship until the 1950s, when a small church was erected on a plot of ground adjoining the older building's remains.

Atil is large, by the Altar River Valley standards, and the lucky traveler may find an occasional drum of gasoline on hand which may have to be bartered for instead of purchased. Beside this questionable facility, the small store from which the sometimes-gas and limited canned goods are dispensed, and a couple of

rundown *cantinas*, constitute about all there is of Atil's services. But despite the village's shortcomings, lovers of our own Old West will delight in the wooden railings standing in front of many of the buildings where horses are tied. Here the horse still vies for supremacy over the newfangled automobile. *Vaqueros* plod along the dirt streets astride their sun-shriveled Sonoran horses, their curiously bedecked saddles and stirrups their marks of personal wealth.

South of Atil the road parallels a concrete-lined irrigation canal and because of its frequent use, the traveler can speed as high as 35 miles per hour! Frequent sideroads lead to ranches in the vicinity but the way on to Altar and solid pavement is plain now. The heavily vegetated desert and the chaparral-covered hills are behind and the terrain is dotted with gaunt saguaro cacti and sparse desert scrub.

The second of the restored missions is at Oquitoa, another agricultural town in this narrow but lush river valley, which dates back to the early 1700s. It is 18.6 miles south of Atil, the road following the canal all along the leg.

Padre Kino visited the site of Oquitoa as early as 1693 on an explanatory journey toward the majestic Gulf of California. Four thousand Indians of the Soba tribe inhabited the banks of the Altar River at the site. Since they asked for conversion to Christianity, the *Mision San Antonio de Oquitoa* was founded in 1705.

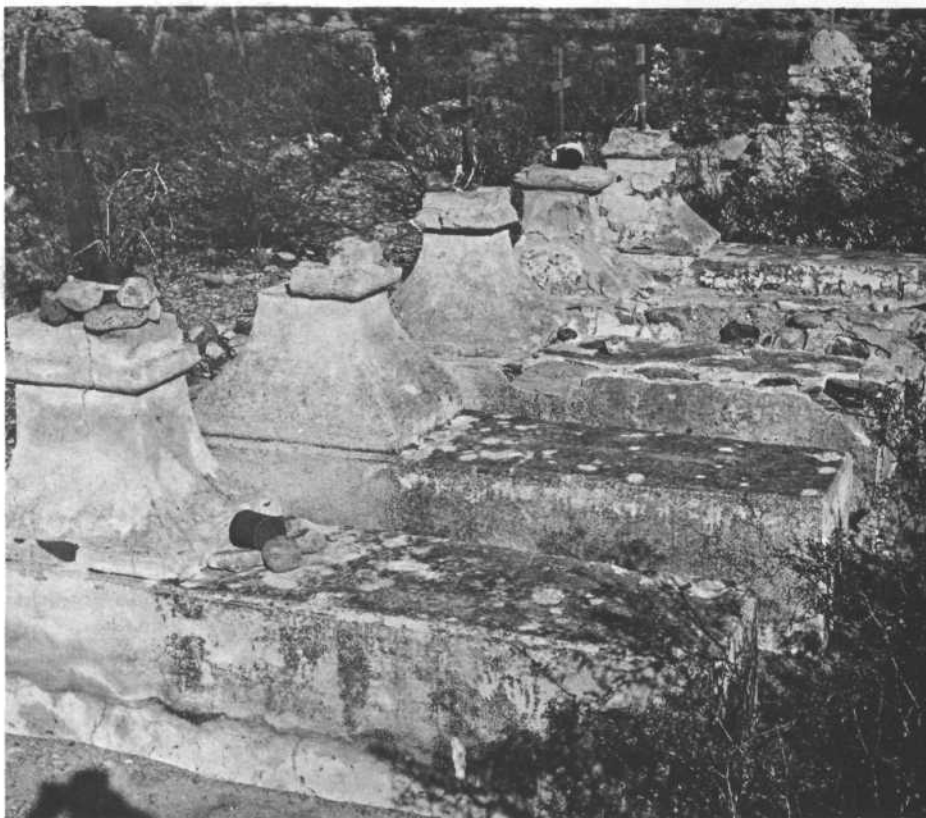
Following the history of other Altar Valley missions, Oquitoa flourished until the late 1700s, then lapsed into steady decay. The present mission site is on top of a low hill just west of town. A steep dirt road—an extension of Oquitoa's main street—leads to it. Restoration of the mission in 1959 has caused it to lose most of its original appearance, but a unique conch doorway was fashioned somewhat reminiscent of New World design. Dating from the old days, though, is the cemetery which at Oquitoa strangely surrounds the mission instead of lying to one side as was general practice.

The asphalt of Highway #2 at Altar is only 6.6 miles southward from Oquitoa. The rural population increases as one follows the irrigation canal for there is a growing number of roadside buildings and nearby ranch houses evident as Altar is approached. Finally, Altar is visible ahead in the distance and one quickly finds himself back within the present age.

There is yet one more restored mission on our circuitous route; that at Altar—

Continued on page 35

Cemetery at Oquitoa surrounds the church. Age of crypts is unknown.



The Wheel Estate Way

by Jack Delaney

"GO WEST, young man, and grow up with the country." This was Horace Greeley's advice to the restless youth of the mid-19th century. Had they ignored his advice with the excuse that covered wagons were too small to provide all of the comforts of home, the West would never have been won.

Fortunately, many men, women, and children decided in favor of the trip; even though the old prairie schooners could have been accurately described as a bit tight under the arms. History books are loaded with accounts of hardships experienced by these sturdy people, but the suffering and misfortune was never claimed to have been caused by the limited space in their canvas-covered coaches. In a majority of cases the tragic incidents resulted from either of two frequently occurring conditions—a shortage of food within the wagons or an abundance of Indians without!

Modern day trailerites may have a similar space problem in their "wagons" but they just squeeze into them and enjoy every moment of their jaunts. No matter how far they travel during the day, when they drop anchor their trailers offer all of the features of conventional homes, except termites. The dream of gypsy freedom and adventure has tempted many couples, and families, into buying trailers. They are usually happy with the experi-

ment in mobile living and start planning early for their retirement years.

In slightly more than a century, rolling residences have progressed from crude covered wagons to trim travel trailers and modern mobile homes. *Travel trailers* are generally 12 to 35 feet in length, and are intended to provide a homelike atmosphere for those who enjoy wandering around the country. *Mobile homes* run approximately 38 to 60 feet in length, and are designed to provide a homelike atmosphere for those who are tired of wandering around the country.

Any impression that they are glorified tin cans, or free-wheeling quonset huts, is incorrect. Many mobile homes contain as much space as a typical four-room apartment; and provide comfort, easy maintenance, and all of the frills of gracious living. These include music systems, air conditioning, fireplaces, artistic furnishings, cabanas, ramadas, patios, sun-decks, etc. Their principle attraction, when moored in a "park," is the way of life they have to offer—a pleasant, satisfying existence of insulation from the world without isolation from it.

The sale of travel trailers has grown into a 150 million dollar business; and mobile home sales have passed the billion dollar a year mark, according to the Mobile Homes Manufacturing Association. There are more than 16,000 develop-

ments in the United States to accommodate these vehicles, and approximately 4,400 of them are in California. Former State Controller Alan Cranston informs us that there are nearly 300,000 travel trailers and mobile homes registered in this state—a figure higher than the total population of Alaska.

Southern California leads the world in the number and variety of luxury parks it offers to the roving public. From Bernice Richardson, publisher of the *Desert Trailer News*, we learned that the Coachella Valley area alone, from Yucca Valley to the Salton Sea, has more than 70 of them, with at least 12,000 carefree residents. The Hemet region, about halfway between Los Angeles and San Diego, and halfway between the desert and the ocean, is an important mobile home park center. There are more than 30 in this peaceful "Ramona" country, nestled in the foothills with Mt. San Jacinto as a backdrop.

Another community where the accent is on mobile homing is the Yucaipa Valley, near Redlands. More than 30 trailer and mobile sanctuaries serve as home for 5000 of the approximately 20,000 people who enjoy life in this beautiful apple country. It is here that the 1966 California Shuffleboard Tournament was held with more than 300 players competing.

The spacious clubhouse and recreational facilities, including hot mineral water pools, of Desert Country Club Estates in Desert Hot Springs overlooks Coachella Valley.



Acceptance of mobile home living is not limited to Southern California. As stated in the January, 1966, issue of *DESERT*, a "survey of the city of Yuma, Arizona and the surrounding region will reveal 44 parks for those who prefer to live on wheels." it was also stated that "while house trailers to rent are difficult to locate in most areas, several mobile home parks in Yuma offer rental service." It is safe to say that the whole Pacific Southwest section of the United States is mobile home minded.

Following, is brief information on a selected group of places that were visited by the author. Space would not permit coverage of all, or even a significant portion of the total assortment; so the few mentioned here should be considered as only a sample. To minimize repetition in these descriptions the term, *standard recreational facilities*, is used to cover the attractions usually featured in this area, such as swimming pools, sunbathing decks, shuffleboard courts, horse-shoe courts, card tables, etc.

Desert Crest Country Club is located on Dillon Road, about 5 miles east of Desert Hot Springs. This is an *own-your-own* land development, with maintained streets, sewer system, mail delivery, and underground utility wires, including the television cable. The scene is dominated by a luxurious clubhouse, with all of the recreational facilities that might be expected in a swank, country club type of playground. These are retained by the management company for use of the residents. Approximately 50% of the individual owners are retirees.

The price level at *Desert Crest* appears to be reasonable for a high prestige center. Lots sell for \$3300 to \$3950, and the fee for club membership is \$15 per month. Also, costs of utilities and taxes are borne by the residents. Age restriction is 14 years or older, and pets are allowed if controlled. The location provides an unobstructed view of the colorful desert with majestic mountains in the background.

Desert Crest also features therapeutic mineral baths and its main swimming pool contains naturally heated water.

The Caravansary, in the same general area, is an adult haven that caters mainly to trailers. It has an attraction that is important on the desert—plenty of shade. With tamarisk windbreaks, many other trees, shrubs, flowers, etc., it could be called a "vacation spot." The 65 spaces rent for \$3.50 per day, \$17.50 per week, or \$45.00 per month. Standard recreational facilities are augmented by a 104 degree hot pool, with natural mineral

water from their own well. This pool is enclosed to provide an ideal spa for nighttime use. It's fun to take a hot bath with your neighbors before retiring!

Laurence Welk's Country Club Mobile Estates is located along U. S. Highway 395, about seven miles north of Escondido, California. A drive through the entrance will reveal a charming tract with hundreds of oak trees providing shade and beauty for the residents to enjoy. It is spread out around an 18-hole golf course which can be viewed from the two-story clubhouse and restaurant. The latter is open to the public. Utility wires are all underground, and the development is terraced to provide a pleasing view of the rolling hills from many of the spaces.

A feature of this park is a four-unit motel where prospective residents may see if the group is right for them, or more important, if they are right for the group, before moving in. Standard recreational facilities are offered, in addition to the golf course. There are 200 spaces with rental rates of \$60 to \$85 per month, and no extras or assessments. Residency is limited to adults, but no strict age requirement is observed. No pets are permitted. Almost 100% of the tenants are retired.

Art Linkletter's Sierra Dawn Estates, in the city of Hemet, is different in that it is zoned as a mobile home subdivision. Lots are sold to the residents (no rental spaces) and each site faces on a street that is maintained by the city. There are street lights, sewers, regular street numbers, mail delivery to each mobile home, and city police and fire protection. All utilities are out of sight, and central television and radio antennas serve all units. A highlight of this swank "subdivision" is the \$350,000 recreation center, which is owned and managed by the development company.

Living in *Sierra Dawn* appears to be very pleasant for those who can afford above-average surroundings. Price of the 686 lots range from \$4500 to \$6000, or higher; and ownership involves the payment of property taxes and utility bills. Also, a membership fee of \$20 per month is charged for use of the facilities in the recreation area mentioned above. There is an age restriction here—one of each couple must be at least 45 years old (the other may be 40), and no dogs nor cats are allowed.

Fairview Mobile Home Park, also in the Hemet area, was selected for mention because of its quiet, homelike, atmosphere and moderate rates. Located on Highway 74, a couple of miles out of the

city, this spot is about six years old, though it appears to be newly developed. It appeals to permanent residents, and is exclusively adult (youngsters are permitted only as guests). There are 200 spaces spread out over 35 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds. All utility wires are underground.

The whole park is terraced, from the entrance at the highway level up to the spectacular view locations at the base of the foothills. The rate for rental of a space is \$45 to \$65 per month. This includes use of the standard recreational facilities, plus a putting green. A modern clubhouse is centrally located; and accommodations are provided for overnight guests of the residents. *Fairview* is truly a garden, with hundreds of shrubs and more than 5000 rose bushes. Two full-time professional gardeners are required to keep the grounds in top condition.

Swan Lake Mobile Home Park, at 5800 Adams Street, Mira Loma, California (about 12 miles from Riverside) is a luxury development. The clubhouse and surrounding area are about as posh as any in Southern California. This is a rental type park, with 350 spaces. At the entrance, there is a small spread of shops of which the clubhouse is an integral part. It features a fine restaurant and cocktail lounge. Automobiles are never seen within these grounds. They are parked around the perimeter, and electric golf carts are used exclusively on the interior roads and walks.

Rental rates for spaces are \$55 to \$100 per month (the top rate is for lake-front locations). There is an additional flat rate of \$15 per month for utilities, and a rental fee for the electric golf carts. No charge is made for use of the recreational facilities, including the driving and putting greens. Children are not permitted as residents, but other pets are—if kept on leash. About 75% of the tenants are still working, so this is not a retirement center.

Bermuda Palms Mobile Estates is about 20 miles from Palm Springs, at 80-870 Highway 111, in Indio. Located on America's golden desert, this mobile home harbor is surrounded by the Coachella Valley's far-flung tapestry of citrus trees and date palms. It is a modern, peaceful spot with many distinctive features; and is convenient to shopping areas, churches, restaurant, etc. Being about a block off the highway, it has a quiet atmosphere.

Standard recreational facilities at *Bermuda Palms* are well-maintained. In addition, the residents enjoy a therapeutic pool, library, billiard room, and a fabu-

lous recreation and social hall. There is no extra charge for these features. Rates for the 180 spaces are \$45 and \$50 per month, with one month free the first year. During the summer months, those who wish to leave may retain their space for \$10 per month. Free grass seed is provided for lawns, as an incentive to the tenants to keep the grounds beautiful. No charge is made for the water, from their own well, which is claimed to be the best on the desert. This is an adult park, and pets are permitted if kept on leash.

Bing Crosby's Blue Skies Village, in the Palm Springs area, is on Highway 111, adjacent to Thunderbird Country Club. It has been called, in the London Daily Express, the world's most exclusive mobile home site. In order to be accepted here, one must first apply for membership in the Club, furnish character and credit references, and keep his fingers crossed. Because of a ruling against pets and children, even Bing cannot be a resident of this unique paradise; though the main thoroughfare bears his name—Bing Crosby Road! Other roads are also named after show business celebrities. Imagine living at the corner of Greer Garson and Danny Kaye!

Blue Skies is appropriately named because it is "out of this world." Its com-

plexes follow specific themes; such as, Western, Oriental, Egyptian, Italian, and even authentic New Orleans, with a rooftop sleeping deck and an \$8500 fountain! If one could pull away all of the additions and embellishments (which would be difficult to do because of their immobility), he would find an ordinary mobile home hidden somewhere within the glamorous accoutrements of each "work of art!" Some of the club members even have travel trailers in the rear, to house their maids.

An attraction of this ritzy roost is the 500 palm trees which are lighted at night. Standard recreational facilities, with many plusses, are offered. Occupancy of the 162 spaces is on a five-year lease basis, and the rate is \$70 to \$82.50 per month, with no extra charges for recreation. However, a sizable budget for social activity might be advisable. This prestige colony is an interesting place in which to plant your "home," if you can pass the entrance examinations!

Mobile mansions are moved, on the average, only about once in four years so selection of the proper park is important. Before setting a mobile dwelling on blocks one should consider the following points: convenience of location, type of park (plush, country club, or cozy rose-

covered), basic cost of accommodations, and extra expenses involved in the full participation in activities. Another important point to check is the various restrictions. These are usually imposed for the benefit of the majority, but it is a good idea to study the "fine print" and decide if they are acceptable before "joining the club."

In the numerous places surveyed by the author, a wide assortment of restrictions was noted. Here are a few of them: No parking in streets, every home must have metal skirting and metal awnings, standard lawn furniture only will be permitted on patios and porches, all overnight visitors must be registered at office, visits of grandchildren are limited to one week, children shall be confined to the space they are visiting unless accompanied by an adult, and the wearing of bathing attire is limited to the pool area only.

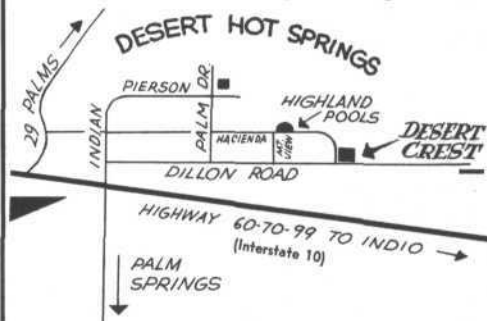
Many of the people who have discovered the easy living secret may be descendants of the pioneers who followed Horace Greeley's advice, more than 100 years ago. Their appreciation of their present way of life could lead to an up-to-date bit of advice, especially for those who are on the threshold of retirement—"Go rest, man, and glow with the mobile home crowd!" □



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SEARCH for THE WHITE PALM

by R. O. Schnabel

EVERY SO often in the literature of the southwest deserts there appears a most intriguing story about a lost canyon that is full of white palm trees and other kinds of vegetation. The story concerns a heat-addled old prospector who has stumbled up a remote canyon in search of water. As he rounds a bend, the narrow gorge opens out into a small valley, down the middle of which courses a stream of pure water, and the stream is bordered by several hundred fan palms all glistening white in the mid-day sun. Under the palms are grasses and bushes equally white—truly a ghostly scene. The prospector quenches his thirst, fills his water bags, and spends several hours marveling at the whiteness of his secret world. When he returns to civilization he spreads the story of this magic scene and then disappears, leaving the location of the white canyon a mystery forever.

About 10 years ago a large newspaper in Southern California's desert published an account of this white palm canyon and even ran a picture of the palms. The palms were obviously *Washingtonias* photographed through a green filter, and the result was an astounding portrayal of whiteness. However, the locale of the

trees was not stated and the story was left in the realm of legend.

Since I have been a collector of rare palms for many years, this legend did stimulate my imagination enough to cause me to delve into scientific journals in search of a possible rare white desert palm. And happily, if not somewhat amazingly, I found a reference, but in the Spanish language! The location of the *palma blanca*, or white palm, was in the desert regions of Sonora, Mexico.

Scientifically known as *Sabal Uresana* and described as a medium sized fan palm with dark green fans, I soon learned that the *palma blanca* was really the Sonoran palmetto. This knowledge was confounded by specimens of other palm trees from Sonora in my collection which are silvery or white in color (*Erythea Armata*, *Erythea Clara*) and sometimes called locally in Sonora *palma verde*, or green palm. So now it appeared that the green palms were white; the white palms green! And to make matters worse, another palm (*Erythea Brandegeei*) whose fans are green on top and white on the underside is called *palma negra*, or black palm, although in this case the reference is to the color of the freshly cut wood. There was only one thing to do—go to Sonora and find these trees for myself. So the search was on.

Most references to *Sabal Uresana* placed it in southeast Sonora. I searched first in Alamos, but, although I found a number of interesting trees there, none of them were palms. I then tried the most northernly location at which my quarry had been reported—the Babisso range 35 miles east of Magdalena and about 100 miles south of the Arizona border. But there, again, each road ended in a cactus patch. After these two defeats, it occurred to me that Ures, the pueblo after which *S. Uresana* was named because the tree was first found near there, would be a likely spot. Ures is a nice, sleepy, dusty little town, but with no white palms today, if ever they did exist there. With this third disappointment, I headed for home, but remained determined that I would return again to find this illusive palm.

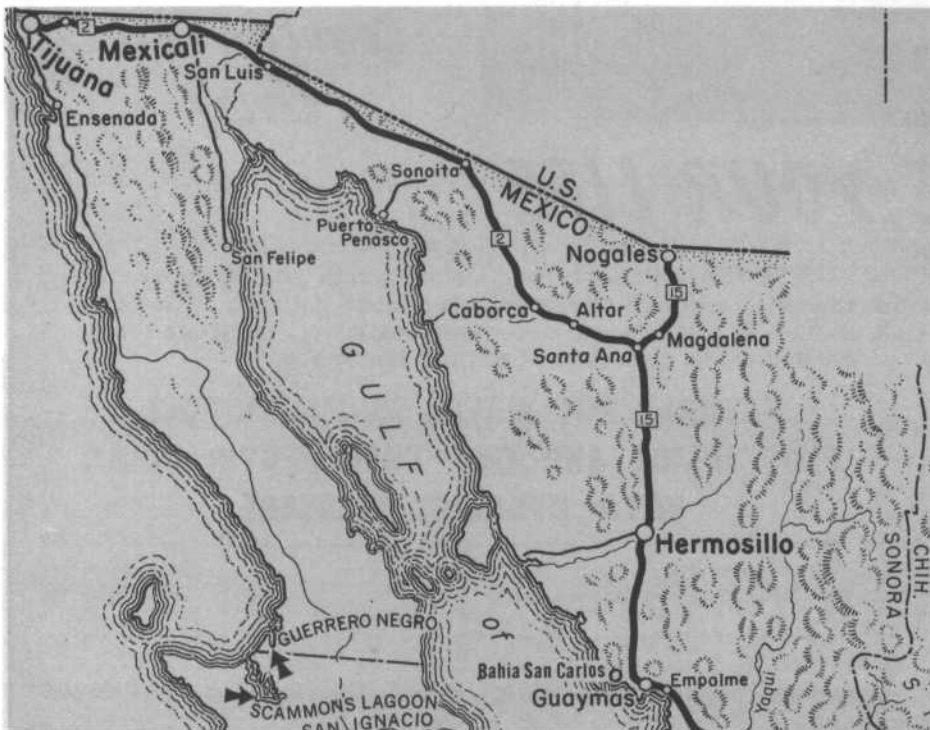
One year later, while setting up my trailer at the San Carlos Bay trailer park, I casually asked the mozo sent to help me if he had ever seen a *palma blanca*. "Si, señor," he replied. "Look over there and you will see one."

To my utter astonishment, there on the beach, not 50 feet from the Gulf of California, was a large and very green "white palm".

It took only a short time to find that the dirt road leading inland and north west from San Carlos Bay followed along a streambed lined with hundreds of *S. Uresana* in all stages of development. Ultimately, this road leads around famous Pico Doble and 15 miles up the coast of the Gulf of California along which there are several large groves with thousands of perfect, mature specimens of *palma blanca* as well as specimens of other native palms.

S. Uresana, the cousin of Florida's cabbage palm, is the desert member of a large genus of palms that range from southeast United States into South America. It is primarily this genus which supplies the Latin American delicacy, hearts of palm salad. This, and other edible uses of the tree's growing bud, has reduced what formerly were large stands of palms around Alamos to the present day scarcity. In addition, the use of the trunk for building, beetle infestations, and draught

Three old Sabal Uresana amid a clump of many smaller ones at San Carlos Bay, Sonora.





The author's daughter holds an acaulescent fan of the *S. Uresana*. Note the star shape and lack of mid-rib.



have all contributed to the shrinking palm population in southeast Sonora.

An interesting characteristic of the *Sabal* family makes it the "missing link" of the palm world. Of hundreds of palm genera, most all are either fan palms like California's *Washingtonia* or feather palms like the commercial date and the

coconut. But *Sabal* is neither fan nor feather, but an intermediate type showing characteristics of both—hence the "missing link."

Although basically a fan palm, in mature specimens of *palma blanca* the stem, as in feather palms, projects a mid-rib through the longitudinal center of the

fan. From the mid-rib, the leaflets grow outward and upward. Each leaflet is joined to its neighbor for almost its full length and the unjoined tips droop downward at the outer extremity of the fan like a tassel while the unique mid-rib curves gracefully downward from its center point. The total effect is exotic and a single fan bears a fascinating likeness to ostrich feather plumes.

The large leaf is often three feet across and three feet long on a three to four foot stem. Its texture is thick and leathery; its color dark bluish-green. At times the fan is covered with a white waxy substance which is responsible for its paradoxical name. At maturity, the tree reaches 30 feet and the bole is perhaps two feet in diameter, of a ruddy color, and self cleaning of its fans.

Why California and Arizona gardeners have not introduced this palm into their landscapes is a mystery, as *S. Uresana* has still another attractive characteristic not found in other palms. After sprouting from the seed, the tree enters a long period of acaulescence—a state similar to adolescence in humans. In acaulescence, no trunk appears above ground and the tree may remain trunkless for from two to 10 years or more, and then suddenly grow rapidly to maturity. During this time large green, star-shaped fans without the mid-rib grow on long green stems in graceful clumps, which provide the soft, tropical look so sought after in southwestern gardens.

As if these were not enough virtues, *palma blanca* is also weather hardy. It flourishes in the fiery summers of the lowland Sonoran deserts and it flourishes high in the Sonoran mountains where frequent winter frost and an occasional snow does not discourage it. Because of this hardiness, it should do well in all the palm growing areas of the southwestern states.

But what about the white palms of the old prospector story? After visiting many groves, I was about to cross off this legend as pure fancy. Then late one afternoon, while driving away from a grove, I happened to glance back at the trees. The grove was backlit and the sun's rays were glistening off the waxy white coating on the leaves. The sun's rays were also glaring directly from the waters of the Gulf onto the palms. The intense light obliterated all traces of green pigment and the trees did, indeed, appear ghostly white. Yes, it could be that the old prospector had actually seen what he had reported. His lost canyon no doubt still awaits discovery somewhere in the hot desert hills of Sonora. □



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THE AIR is crisp; the fierce heat of summer is gone. This is the perfect time to explore the desert. And, among the most beautiful of all the desert regions awaiting exploration, is the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park—the largest statepark in California. Covering 478,000 acres of land, it rises from the bottom of an ancient sea to the 6000-foot height of lofty San Ysidro Mountain.

In the spring, wildflowers spread mad color across the dunes—primrose, sand verbena, and desert lillies are dependable along Rainbow Wash, Borrego Springs Road, and Palm Canyon Road. In March or April, depending upon nature's contribution of early rain and warm sunshine, crimson ocotillo burst into bloom. Naturalist activities, for those interested, are scheduled from October 1 through May 30, at Borrego Palm Canyon Campground and Tamarisk Grove.

The park may be reached by a major thoroughfare, State Highway 78, which

fornia Indian customs. Ten years later, while carrying dispatches to the Mission San Gabriel, Fages crossed the desert and explored the region above Carrizo Creek, thus opening the trail followed by later emigrant trains to Warner's Ranch. Don Pedro Fages, incidentally, climaxed his career by becoming the fourth Spanish governor of California, a position he held for nine years.

In 1774 another Spaniard, Juan Bautista de Anza, with 20 soldiers, a few muleteers and a Franciscan friar crossed the Colorado Desert in an attempt to establish an overland route from Mexico to the California coastal missions. The following year, Anza made another crossing, this time escorting a weary group of settlers from Sonora to San Francisco. During his second expedition, camps were made at three locations within the park; and on Christmas Eve, 1775, at Middle Willows in the northern end of Borrego Valley, a woman with the expedition gave

birth to the first white child born in California.

The southern route to the coast—by way of the Colorado River crossing near present day Yuma, Arizona—was thus opened by the Spanish. Except for a short period when Indian uprisings made travel impossible, this route was one of the principal arteries of early travel. The Anza-Borrego Desert played host to trappers and mountain men, smugglers and horse-thieves, American soldiers during the Mexican War, Forty-Niner's and later emigrants, the government's Boundary Survey expedition, and the Butterfield Stage Company. Then, abruptly, this hazardous desert trail became a "forgotten highway" in favor of more direct routes.

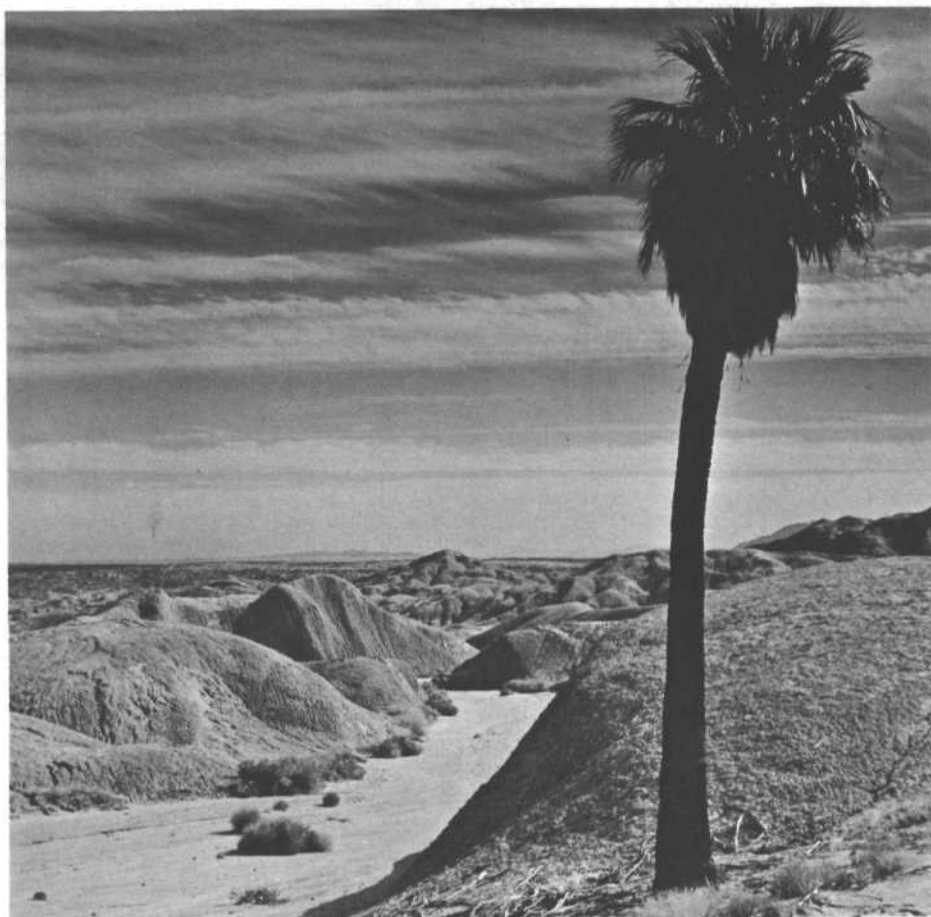
Traces of the old trail still stretch across the miles as if waiting for stage coach wheels to churn up its dust. Time stands still in this corner of the desert. At various times the trail has been called the Sonora Road, the Colorado Road, the

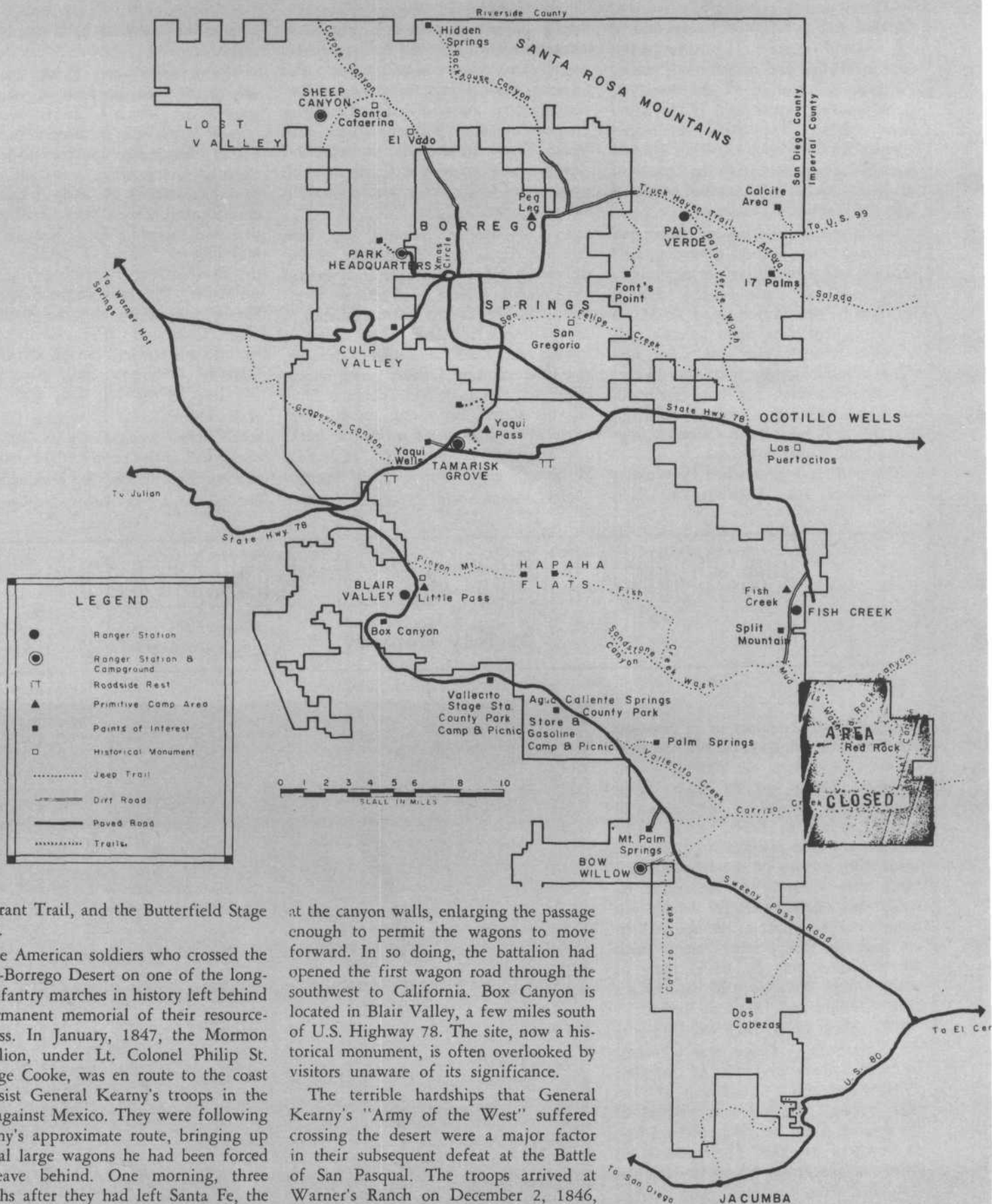
FASCINATING ANZA-BORRECO

by Kay Ramsey

crosses through its center in an east-west direction, with, roughly, the Borrego Desert area lying above the highway in the northern portion and the Anza Desert lying below. Because of the danger of bogging down in heavy sands, traffic within the park is restricted to established roads. Dry arroyos of the Borrego Badlands offer access by 4-wheel drive vehicles into remote country where you might catch a glimpse of the elusive Desert Bighorn Sheep, other remote areas are accessible only by trails, some of which follow the foot-paths used by ancient Cahuilla and Diegueno Indians.

The arrival of the first white men to the Anza-Borrego Desert was witnessed by these Indians in 1772. At that time Pedro Fages and a detachment of "leather jackets," the mounted soldiers of the Spanish Army, set out from San Diego in search of deserters. Their pursuit led them into the desert, where the trail was lost, then on a northward loop through the unexplored regions of the interior, and eventually to the coast near San Luis Obispo. Gages was a careful observer of the new country and its natives; his diary of this trail-blazing expedition contains one of the earliest descriptions of Cali-



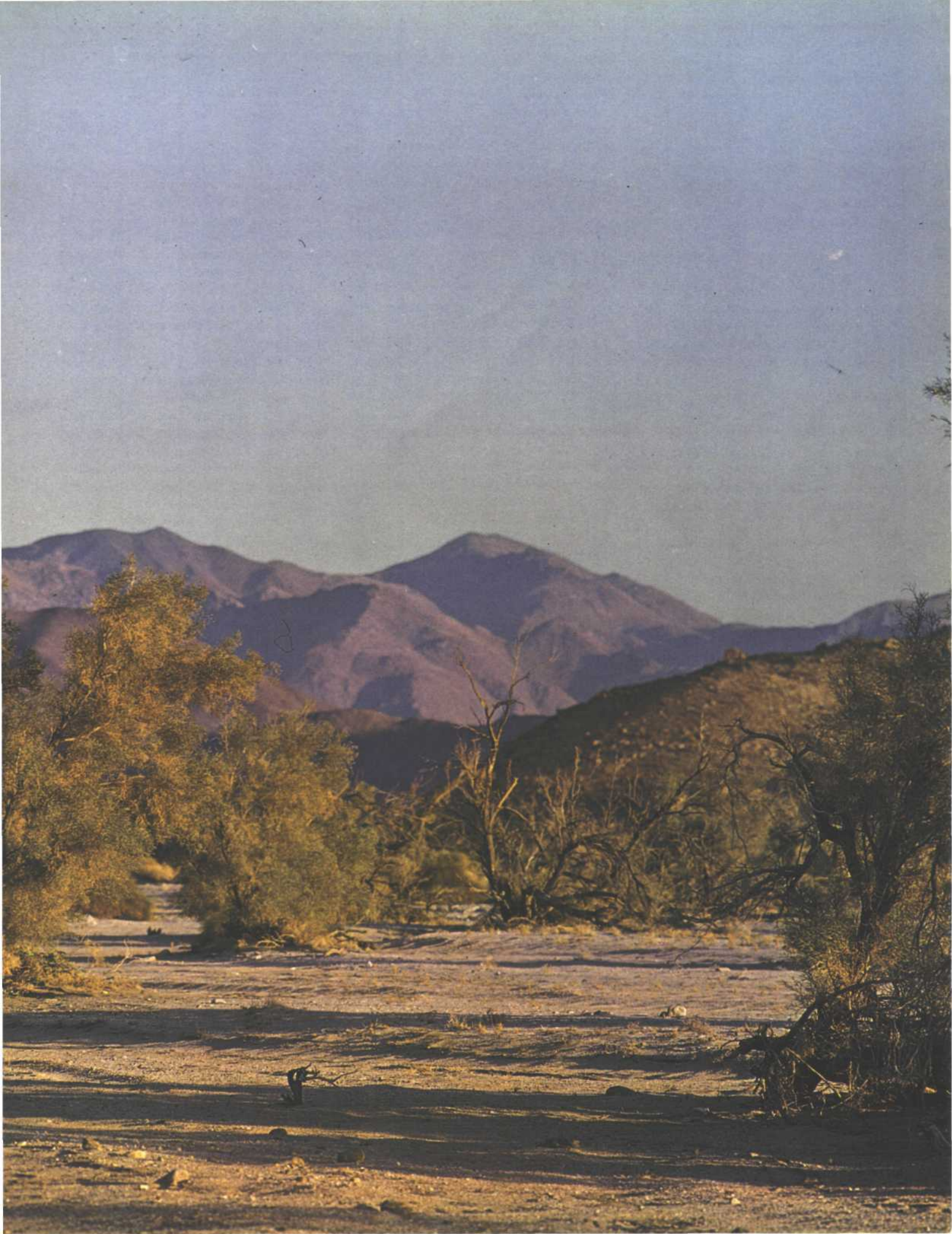


Emigrant Trail, and the Butterfield Stage Road.

The American soldiers who crossed the Anza-Borrego Desert on one of the longest infantry marches in history left behind a permanent memorial of their resourcefulness. In January, 1847, the Mormon Battalion, under Lt. Colonel Philip St. George Cooke, was en route to the coast to assist General Kearny's troops in the war against Mexico. They were following Kearny's approximate route, bringing up several large wagons he had been forced to leave behind. One morning, three months after they had left Santa Fe, the battalion stood at the entrance to Box Canyon. Advancing slowly, they soon found themselves hemmed in by a vertical wall of granite 15 feet high. Undaunted, the soldiers produced picks and axes and crowbars and hammered away

at the canyon walls, enlarging the passage enough to permit the wagons to move forward. In so doing, the battalion had opened the first wagon road through the southwest to California. Box Canyon is located in Blair Valley, a few miles south of U.S. Highway 78. The site, now a historical monument, is often overlooked by visitors unaware of its significance.

The terrible hardships that General Kearny's "Army of the West" suffered crossing the desert were a major factor in their subsequent defeat at the Battle of San Pasqual. The troops arrived at Warner's Ranch on December 2, 1846, after a harrowing, two-month desert crossing. Their animals had sometimes been without water for two or three days and many had died. Ragged and exhausted from the ordeal seven men finished off a whole sheep at a single meal. Four



days later, riding half-dead mules and wild, unbroken horses, confiscated only days before, they engaged General Andres Pico and the California Lancers in a pitched battle, the bloodiest in the entire conquest of California.

During the Gold Rush, which began two years after Cooke's march, there was public demand for a fast stage line along the southern route. Nothing was done about it until several thousand impatient Californians signed a two-volume congressional petition demanding daily overland mail. In 1857, a contract was awarded to James E. Birch and the San Antonio and San Diego Mail Line was established, the first official transcontinental overland mail line in the United States. Coaches ran semi-monthly, instead of daily, between the two towns for the next 14 months. But they did go through on time, pulled by a six-mule hitch. Soon everyone called it the "Jackass Mail."

Service wasn't entirely satisfactory, however, and congress later signed a three year contract with John Butterfield for a semi-weekly service. He bought out the San Antonio and San Diego Line and extended the route northward, bypassing the port of San Diego. On the morning of Sept. 16, 1858, the first Butterfield Stage raced out of Tipton, Missouri, bound for San Francisco. There were 160 relay stations, placed about 18 miles apart, along the 2,765 mile route. Four-horse teams made the trip in 25 days, or less. One of the important stops for both stage lines was the Vallecito Stage Station in the Anza Desert.

This station was a salt-grass sod house built during the early 1850s by James Lassator in a small valley near a spring. When Lassator learned of the awarding of the mail contracts, he enlarged his sod house so that passengers and drivers could be accommodated. After the stage line was discontinued the sod building became a hide-out for a Mexican bandit who, according to legend, deposited two gold-filled ollas—or water jars—in a nearby canyon, now called Treasure Canyon (*Desert*, December, 1944). Other tenants, at a later date, were soldiers of the U.S. Army who used the station for quarters while they patrolled the trail across the desert.

After Anza Desert State Park was formed in 1933, restoration of Vallecito Stage Station was begun. It now stands essentially the same as it was in the days when it offered a haven for those who ventured across the desolate regions of the Colorado Desert. It may be reached by good roads, and it is one of the principal attractions of the park. Picnic and campgrounds facilities are maintained by the Park System and Vallecito is a lovely place to spend an afternoon.

Below the towering Santa Rosa Mountains, at the other end of the park, lies a grim and forbidding labyrinth of jagged clay hills—the Borrego Badlands. Their bizarre shapes have been formed by centuries of erosion and upward pressure. This is "lost mine" territory. Tales of black gold, of pockets of gold nuggets, of gold-bearing quartz and gold-bearing sands, and even of emeralds, have come out of the Badlands and the Santa Rosa's.

Sometimes the stories are almost alike, only the people involved and the exact location differ. Others border on fancy and wishful-thinking.

The persistence of these tales indicates to "lost mine" experts that somewhere between the rich mines of Julian and the placers near the Colorado River there must be another source of gold. It is fact that the mother lode of the Julian-Banner District has never been located. So the search continues, in the Badlands, in the Santa Rosa Mountains, and throughout the entire Anza-Borrego Desert. Perhaps someday the desert will reveal the secret of its golden treasure. And if it does, some say this will be the greatest bonanza of all times.

In the desert resort and agricultural center of Borrego Valley there is a monument to the most famous lost mine of the desert. It is traditional that on New Years Day, those in search of the "Lost Peg Leg Mine" cast a rock upon the thousands of rocks which already comprise this monument, to bring them good luck in the coming year. Also located in the valley is Park Headquarters, where maps and detailed information may be obtained. This broad valley sits on top of an underground lake. Its waters are tapped to irrigate the gladiolus, stock, and columbine of the cut flower farms for which the community of Borrego Springs is famous.

A visit to the Borrego Desert would not be complete without seeing one of nature's freaks, the Elephant Tree. A grove of these strange trees with misshapen trunks may be seen near Split Mountain where a ranger is stationed to point out the way. This is another area of spectacular geological formation.

Excellent campsites and picnic facilities are available for a small charge at Borrego Palm Canyon and Tamarisk Grove. (Many limited facilities may be found elsewhere.) These campsites have tables with benches, gas plates or wood stoves, and palm-thatched ramadas. Piped drinking water is available, although it is always wise to carry an ample supply while traveling on the desert. When planning an extended visit, leave "Rover" at home as the campgrounds have rules that permit no dogs, except Seeing-eye dogs, within the grounds between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 9:30 a.m.

It is because of such rules that many campers prefer to base themselves in fringe areas near park entrances, where there are splendid camping spots. Others prefer the conveniences of motor lodges and hotels in Borrego Springs. □



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All Aboard for Perris by Marie Valore



AT ONE TIME Perris Valley was part of the vast San Jacinto plains where sheep of Mission San Luis Rey de Francia were put to range and where Indians roamed in quest of edible seeds. Today it is still an individualistic sort of country surrounded with reminders of yesterday, but the most unique of these reminders is not a product of nature, but one of man. It is the Orange Empire Trolley Museum situated on a siding of the old California Southern Railroad in the small town of Perris.

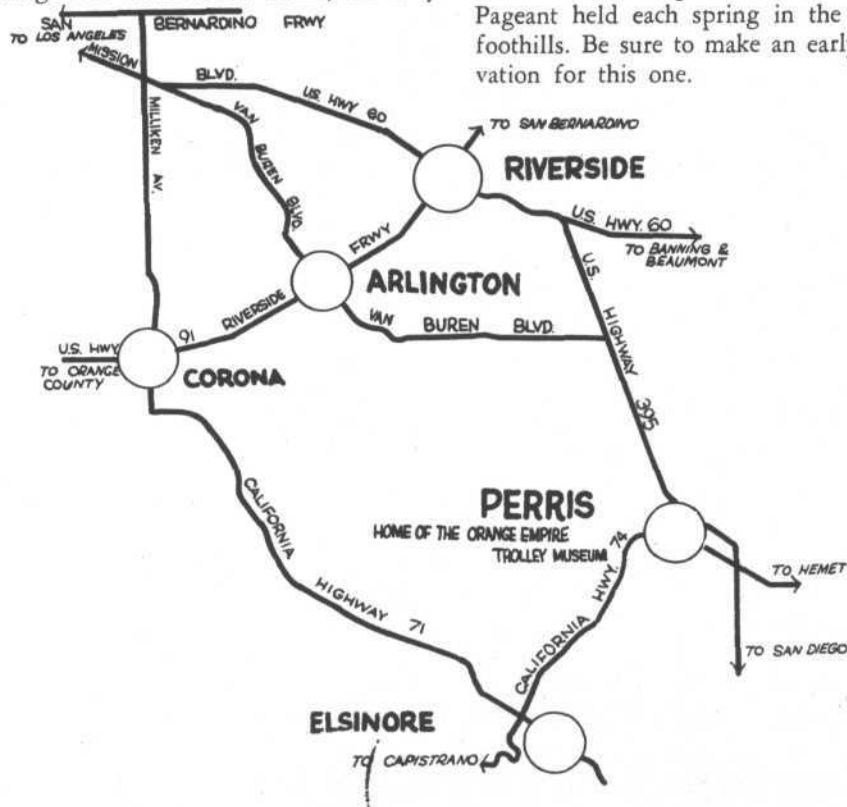
Dating back to 1881 the line linked Perris, in those days called *Pinacate*, with San Diego. An old rock arsenal which still stands on the grounds is believed to have been the first post office and a white frame house a few yards away was the general store.

Although miners picked up mail there earlier, the train stop hardly existed as a town until 1885, when its undignified name, which meant "stink bug" was changed to honor Fred Perris, an early

engineer. The rustic two story Southern Hotel, built two years later by the Barnesconi family, is now an official landmark. Although Perris dates back to gold mining days, it found its permanent wealth in agriculture.

The Orange Empire Trolley Museum was organized by a group of California electric rail fans interested in preserving the fast vanishing rail cars. Incorporated in 1956, the organization purchased the old railroad site in Perris two years later. The collection includes cabooses, interurbans, and early wooden cars as well as later models. Anyone who can remember the cling-clang of a streetcar bell will enjoy a nostalgic visit here.

Located on U.S. Highway 395 in Riverside County, California, the museum is open daily from 10:00 am until sunset. On Sundays and holidays, the trolleys roll down the tracks with passengers, but the most exciting event is the rail excursions they sponsor from Los Angeles and intermediate points to the Ramona Pageant held each spring in the Hemet foothills. Be sure to make an early reservation for this one. □



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Desert Survival

The desert can be a beautiful sight to the traveler, but to a person stranded without water it can mean a quick and tragic death.

by Joe Kraus

THE HISTORY of the desert records thousands of lives lost due to thirst. During the 1860s, more than 400 gold seekers along the Devil's Highway in northern Mexico died for lack of water. In World War II, an American army detachment of 800 failed to reach their destination because of no water. Lack of water also stopped a German advance toward the British in North Africa.

On finding yourself stranded in a hot desert, your prime concern is not how to reach civilization, how to obtain food or shelter. It is water. A healthy human can get along entirely without food for a month; two under favorable conditions. But a man would do well to stay alive for more than a week, if he did not have water.

In hot deserts a man needs a gallon of water a day. If he walks in the cool night, he can get about 20 miles from his daily

gallon. If he does his walking in the daytime heat, he will be lucky to get half that. But whether he sits out his desert survival or walks home to mother, he still needs water.

According to survival experts, your chances of finding water in the deserts are slim. However, a number of guidelines will enhance those chances.

There are three basic characteristics of water you should always keep in mind. Water always flows downhill; it grooves the face of the earth, making creek beds, canyons and washes. And it encourages vegetation. Considering the first point, remember that water seeks the lowest levels available. On the desert, the water you need may be underground.

Fortunately, there are many dry lake beds in the desert. Go to the area which appears the lowest, where rainwater might possibly collect. Then dig into the ground

with your hands or with a sharp rock. This project should be abandoned, however, if you don't hit wet sand in a hurry. If you do hit wet sand, stop digging and allow the water to seep into the hole. If you dig deeper, you may strike alkali water.

Water is also found in dry stream beds. Hike down stream until you find a bend; then dig on the low side of the bend. Because water grooves the face of the earth, look for canyons and hills. A likely place to locate water will be at their bases.

Reed grass, willows, cottonwoods and palm trees usually mark permanent water sources. Desert willows, mesquite, palo-verde, and tesota line drier and deeper waterbeds.

Even in the driest desert, there is a certain amount of wildlife. Where animals are present, there are trails. When you come across one, keep in mind that

water travels downhill, so follow trails in that direction. Should the trail become more frequented as you go along, you'll know you made the right choice. Although animal tracks will lead ultimately to a water hold, the distance may be far greater than a human can walk.

It is also wise to watch bird flights in early morning, but especially in the evening. Birds head for water at these times, but never during the heat of the day. An experienced watcher of desert birds can even tell whether his birds are on their way to, or from evening drink, for their flight from water is characteristically heavy, accompanied by a louder flapping of wings.

Geese often migrate through desert country and their presence is an indication of water, particularly when they fly low, as it is then they follow rivers or chains of ponds or isolated lakes. Bees and hornets also go on watering flights and are excellent guides to water.

Desert plants, too, aid in survival. Fruit of the prickly pear is high in quick-energy sugar, and you can chew the green lobes for moisture. Upon atolls, you will find pigweed, a short, succulent plant about eight inches high with fleshy, reddish-green leaves and stems. Sometimes it bears small yellow flowers and covers the ground in patches. When young, its stems contain a lot of water and chewing them will alleviate your thirst.

The big barrel cactus, another source of drinking water, was first used by Indians when far from water. Cut away the top and either get a drink by mashing the pulp or by sucking moisture from chunks of pulp. Most other types of cactus will produce water if you mash them in a container.

Rainwater, of course, is one of the best sources of water. To continue the accumulation of rainwater after the rain has stopped, tie a rag around a leaning tree or large shrub with one end dripping down into a container. Before it evaporates, you might also be able to collect morning dew.

Another possibility you have, if you are on a beach, is to dig a hole at low tide just below the water mark. The water which runs into it may be salty and discolored, but if you drink with moderation, you can use it.

Through his wisdom, man has developed many strange ways of doing things. Finding water is no exception. Take, for example, the Bushmen in the Kalahari Desert in South Africa. They obtain drinking water from the melons for which their desert is famous, but in an emer-

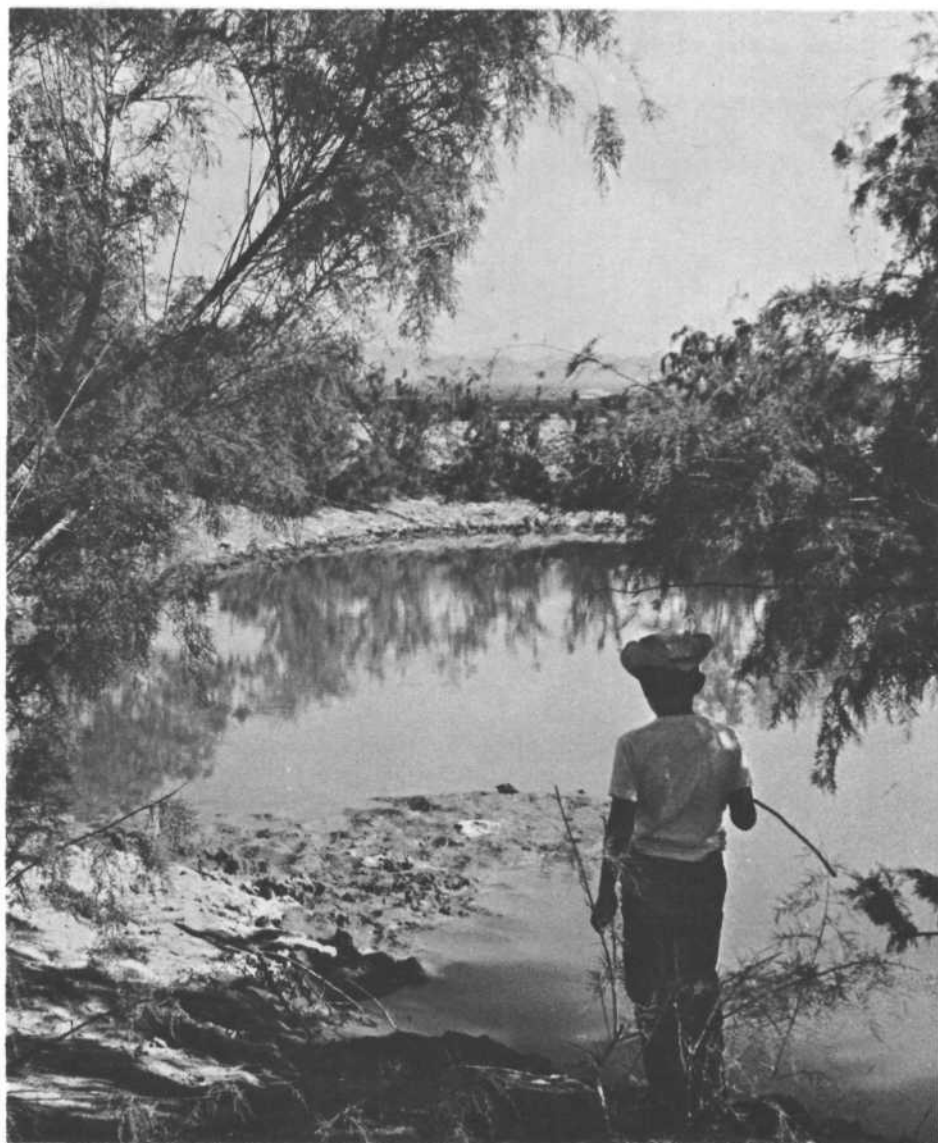
gency, they employ an ingenious method which Dr. Livingstone called a "sucking well." The procedure was reported later by Professor Frank Debenham of Cambridge University. To make one, the Bushman scoops out a three-foot deep hole in the sand, wraps one end of a long hollow reed with dry grass and places it slantwise in the hole. The cavity is then filled with excavated sand and left to sit. After half-an-hour, the Bushman squats beside it and sucks vigorously on the end of the tube, producing a partial vacuum which induces moisture in the sand to collect in the ball of packed grass. Sucking continues until water begins to rise through the tube. One Bushman can produce several gallons of water a day in a region where there is no water for miles. There is no doubt that a similar method could be used in other deserts where damp sand lies not too far below the surface.

Australians, in their vast deserts, have been known to quench thirst with the flat-headed frog. These creatures fill their tissues to capacity with water until they look more like rubber balls than animals. Buried in the soil a foot below the surface, they can withstand an entire dry season.

Another strange, but good method is what is called the "desert still." (See DESERT, Oct. 1965 for details.) Packaged for flyers, these plastic sheets with full instructions are available from the DESERT Magazine Bookshop for \$2.49 plus tax and 25 cents postage. No desert back country traveler should be without one for each member of his family.

The theory is that if the sun is shining, vapor will emerge from the soil and condense against the underside of a special type, water-adherent plastic. These droplets are then collected in a container.

In the accounts of many war-time sur-



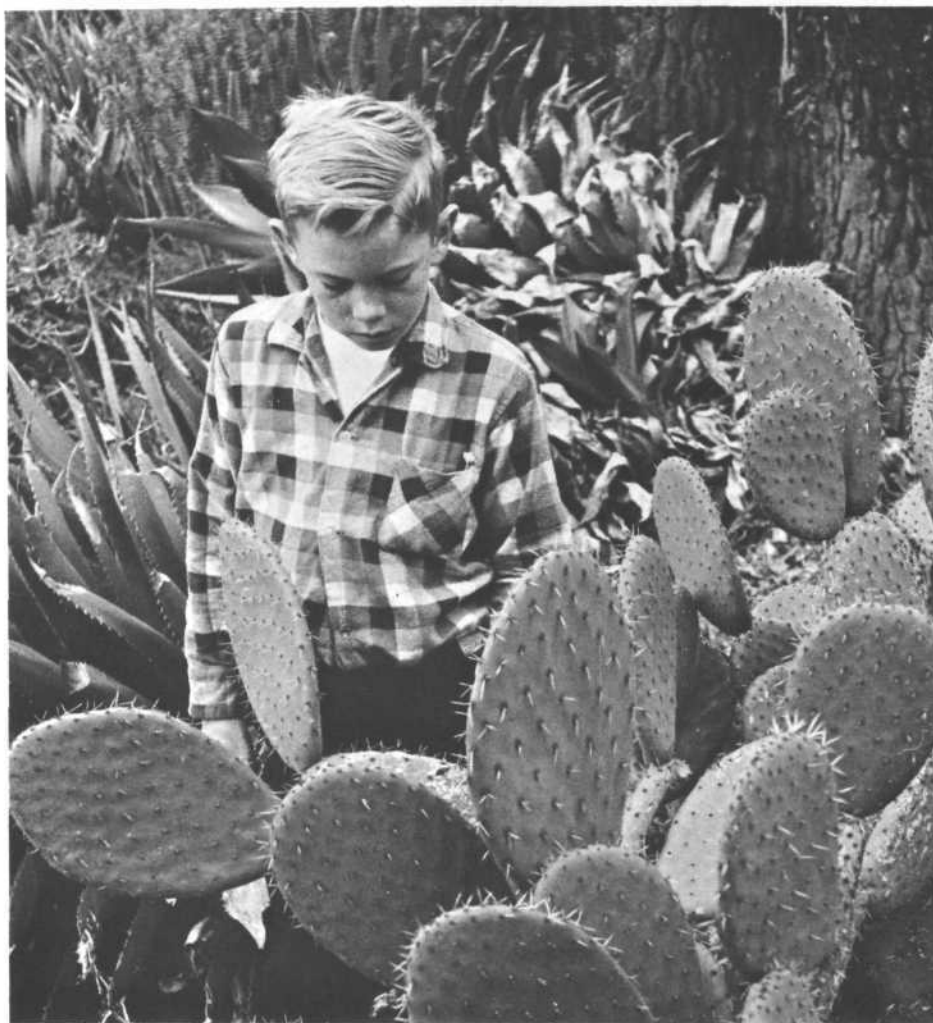
If you are thirsty enough, finding a water hole on the desert is a better sight than discovering a rich gold strike.

vival episodes of military personnel stranded in deserts, one curious fact appears. Often the only survivors were the weaklings. Time and again the man who could not keep up, crawled into a hole or found some sort of shade while the strong ones were never heard from again.

In the arid desert, it is well to remember the strong contrasts between day and night. As no solar heat is used to evaporate water, it all goes into raising the temperature. Conversely, no protective humidity holds back outgoing radiation at night, so little heat is released by condensation to mitigate the fall of the temperature. For his reason, it is best to rest during the hot daylight hours and walk only at night. But when you walk, don't hurry. Remember the Arab; his movements are slow and easy.

The highest temperatures registered are in deserts and sometimes exceed 122 degrees fahrenheit. This, of course, is many degrees above blood-heat. Human life would be impossible in such places were it not for the cooling of the skin by the

If you know where to look, an oasis can be found on even the driest deserts. Here a pool is practically surrounded by sand dunes.



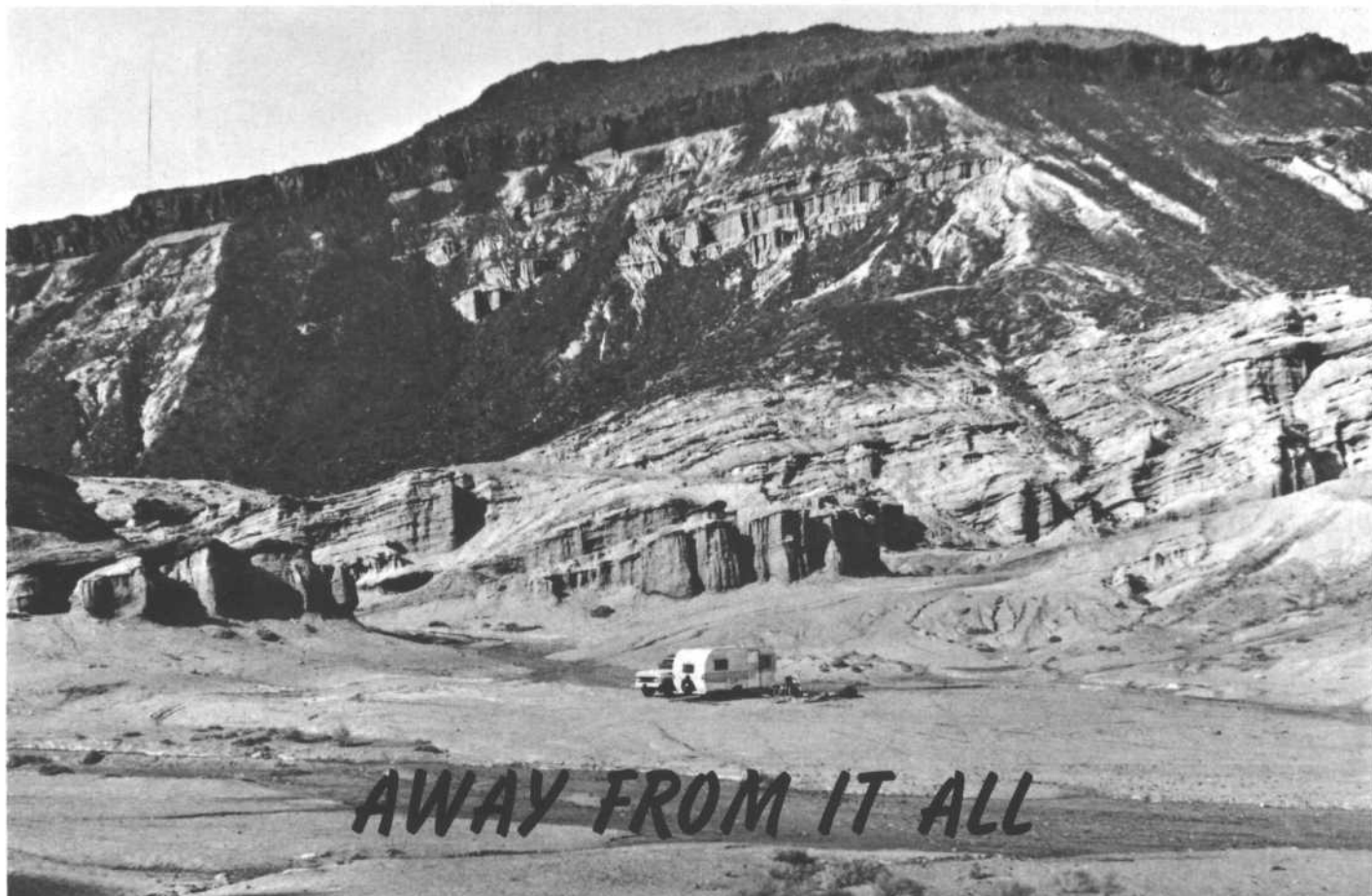
The big barrel cactus is not the only desert cactus good as a source of drinking water. With just about any type of cactus such as the prickly pear (above) you have only to cut off a section of the plant and mash it in a container to get the fluid.

rapid evaporation of perspiration. However, loss of body water through perspiration must be replenished, or death by dehydration results.

Scientists have found that clothes in desert heat reduce the loss from perspiration by 20%. Man is but following the example of the camel, whose thick coat of hair is one of the many ways this creature conserves its private store of water. Desert dwellers should insulate themselves from direct sunrays by wearing hats, long-sleeved shirts, and trousers.

If stranded on a flat, shelterless desert, scoop out a narrow pit in which to lie while the sun is blazing down. For maximum shade, this trench should extend east and west. Two or three feet of depth can result in as much as a 40 degree difference in temperature. But before you take to such a refuge, leave some sign of your presence, in case help passes nearby. A white shirt hung on an upright stick is sufficient. It is always cooler near mountain ranges as a large expanse of solid rock will cause variations in temperature within a wide range.

In a survival situation, overlook nothing, not even that one slim chance of detecting water by smell. Our sense of hearing has been less neglected than our sense of smell, but here, too, we can take a hint from animals who cock their ears. In a life or death situation, no sound is unimportant. The sooner our brains are taught to receive and analyze every sound by our ears, the more efficient at survival we will become. □



by Bill Barnard

THOUSANDS OF people drive through California's Red Rock Canyon. Those who do not stop may be compared to one who listens to the introduction of a song, but never hears the melody. The canyon offers no commercial facilities. There are no hot dog stands, nor souvenir shops; nor are there camp grounds, tables,

rest rooms, water nor other conveniences, just unspoiled beauty.

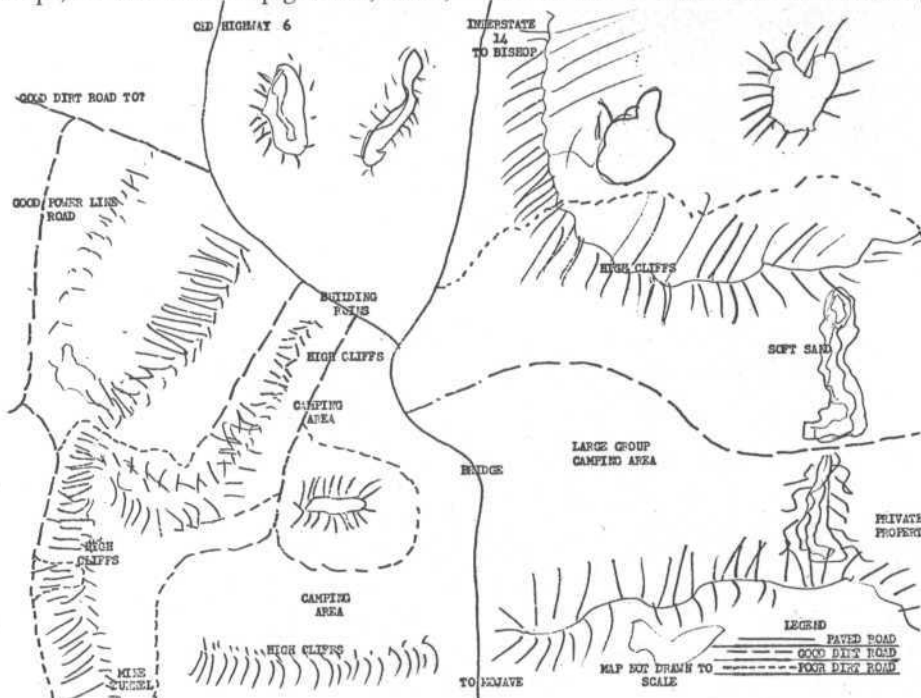
Due to its location, it was largely bypassed by immigrants. It was too far south for those going over Walker Pass to Bakersfield, and too far west for the Wagon Trains heading toward San Fernando. In the late 1800s gold was discovered. A small boom occurred then, but not one to match that of Randsburg

or Red Mountain, a few miles away. Some claims are still being worked. I would suggest you honor the few signs which read, *Keep Out, Survivors Will Be Prosecuted!* Probably 90% or more of the canyon is open to the public, although it is private property.

Much of the area may be traveled in a conventional vehicle, but I would suggest caution, particularly with house-cars and vehicles pulling trailers. Generally speaking, the roads off the paved highway are negotiable for one or two miles. Beyond that, you had better reconnoiter. On the east side of the highway is room for large group camping of about 50 trailers. We usually camp on the west side which has areas large enough to accommodate smaller groups of five to 10 trailers.

One of the best things here is the absence of regimentation and hiking and riding is limited only by ability. By riding, I mean horse or motor bikes. However, the right of private property *must* be recognized.

During the week, the area is often used for movie location shots. On one early morning when we camped there, Hoss, Little Joe, and Ben of the *Bonanza* television series rode up. As the area is rented by movie companies, it is conceivable you might be asked to move to a different camp site. No matter how nice



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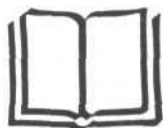
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your equipment, it won't blend well in a Western movie.

Red Rock Canyon is best in the fall, winter or spring. During those periods it is always pleasant. Summer, however, is something else. Although there are gas stations a few miles away, from which you may obtain prepared meals, gas, and oil—and they will usually give water—I would suggest carrying an ample supply

of all aforementioned. Then stay on the obvious trails unless your vehicle is equipped to leave them, and your first visit to Red Rock will be only the beginning. Bisected by Interstate Highway 14 and only 35 miles from Mojave, California, it is as "remote" and splendidly scenic an area as you'll find close to a highway. □



THE FACT that Mike subsequently became a longtime resident guest, because of another matter, of the San Quentin rest home for the wayward money hunters is, in my opinion, no reason for any of his disrepute to rub off on me. He came to my place the third week after the big flood of 1938. It developed that we both had metal detectors and were doing similar work. (I was looking for flood buried new cars for a big insurance holding-company to verify losses.) Mike's "bug" was on the fritz and he wanted help to fix it. Some tinkering on my part uncovered the trouble. As a result, we became friends and pooled our "weekend area" leads of possible cache locations. This is one of his that we were going to look for.

The important part of the story starts back in the late fall of 1925. A prospector working in the Panamint Range west of Death Valley had uncovered a small highgrade stringer and enjoyed some temporary prosperity. His first two burro

hollow pestle fastened to the bent top of a small tree. With this kind of rig, the tree carries the static weight of the pestle and by hand a man can crush out a surprising amount of ore in one shift. The crushed rock is then panned to recover the gold. These "poverty pounders" were only used when rich acid, or free milling, ore was encountered far from a commercial mill.

Before he was completely through crushing out his find he was down to broiled rabbit, unleavened fry pan bread and second run coffee. An experienced prospector, he knew the desert below was becoming blistering hot. Worst of all, he had pulled the little red tin horseshoe trademark off his last plug of chewing tobacco!

So he transferred his mortared-out gold from a tin box into two leather pokes made from the top of an old boot. One poke was completely full, the other about a third. To save weight, he cut up the tent and made four double-thickness

cave, thence easterly to Indian Spring. Why he took this illogical route, I can't figure, but that is how the waybill reads.

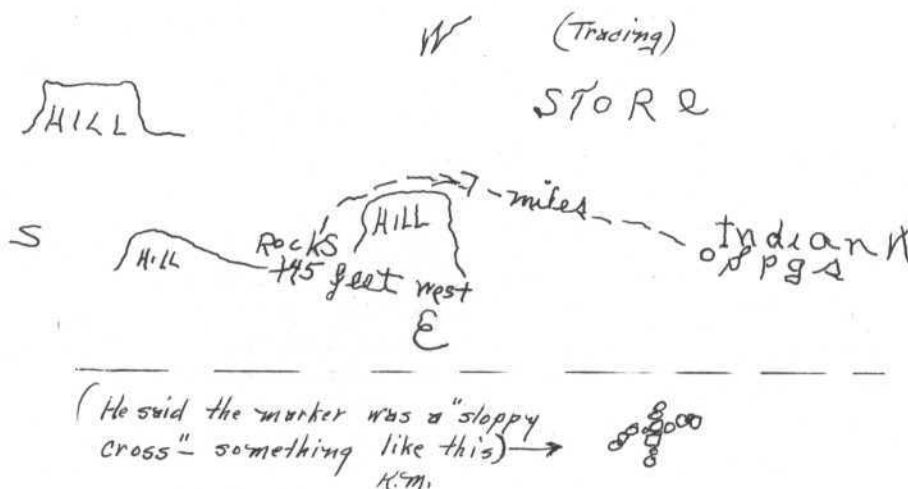
At Indian Spring his trouble started.

Any half-smart burro prodder travels only in the first and last thirds of the day in the desert summer, and finds the shade of a big rock to siesta under during the broiling mid-day. So *something* unaccounted for must have happened at the spring, because the sun was three hands high before he got his animals moving; and it was way past noon before he found enough shade to cover himself.

Shortly after he left this shade-rest, one of the burros developed the heaves and scours, the kind of poisoning stockmen call "blind staggers," and went down to stay. The animal was obviously not going to be able to travel, so the prospector used one of his shells. Then he threw away everything he had except the canteens, the gold, and the ore sacks which he piled on the remaining burro. The canteens and pokes he carried himself.

BUZZTAIL LOOT

by Kenneth Marquiss



loads of highgrade gleanings brought enough to buy another couple of good burros, a big stock of groceries, boots, shells, dynamite, a tight snow proof tent, and more tools. He then holed up for the winter to follow his find.

It soon pinched tortilla thin, but he had plenty of grub, was working in the underground warmth and had nothing better to do, so he kept drilling and mucking. By late spring he was about to call it quits when the stringer suddenly widened out into a beautiful vein pocket of high-grade; the quartz so thickly peppered with yellow it fit the old-timer's definition of "dream rock."

Early in the operation the prospector had rigged a "Mormon Mill" adjacent to the nearby seep where he got his water. These mills are simply a sand-weighted,

saddle sacks, with rope slings, and discarded his wooden panniers. Into these sacks he packed about 230 pounds of his richest remaining ore, carefully hand sorted. These he then loaded onto his two best burros, turned the others loose, and started south toward the railroad at Barstow. His only other baggage consisted of a canvas wrapped blanket, canteens, a sawed-off .410 shotgun made into a "game-getter" pistol, a few shells, salt, matches, and the last of his flour.

Scrambling diagonally down the southwest side of the mountains past the mouth of Redlands Canyon, he camped at Lone Willow Spring. The next day he headed south along the old Granite Spring (now known as Granite Wells) post road to the turn-off canyon that leads south-east to the seep at Robber's Roost

The overloaded burro took this insult for about an hour, then set his brakes. The heat, the ominous turn of events, and now this rebellion was too much. The prospector lost his temper. Jerking off his belt, he beat the burro over the head with the buckle end. To escape the onslaught, the surprised animal jumped backwards into a large bush—the shelter of a big desert buzztail!

There's an old adage that a rattlesnake *always* buzzes before he strikes, but this is simply not so; particularly in very hot weather or if the snake is suddenly surprised. In this case, the burro took the rap.

The setting sun and the death of his last pack animal brought back glimmerings of cold reason to the prospector. He knew he had to cache his gold and come



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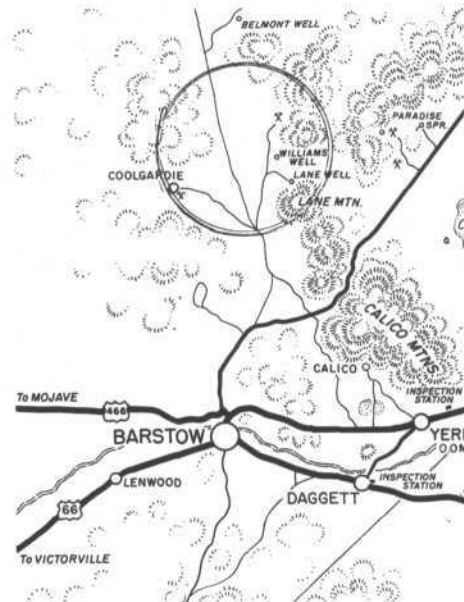


Warming up & drying out. We had camped in a prospector's 'gopher hole' just north of Granite Wells one bitter cold rainy winter night. Dad is on the left.

back for it later. With a stick and bare hands, he buried the big poke and the four sacks of highgrade in the nearest soft, high ground where it would be safe from wind and water. According to the waybill, it was on the easy slope of the nose of a little smooth ridge a short distance from the road and about seven miles south of Indian Spring. It was not deep, but covered with just enough dirt to hide it. With some head-sized rocks nearby, he made a marker cross on the ground by placing a dozen or so side-by-side. To distract a chance passerby, he threw his pack saddle and blanket into a gully in the opposite direction from the dead burro and carrying only the small poke and a canteen, he headed for Barstow.

He made the railroad all right, but at a price.

By the time the train arrived in Los Angeles, he was delirious. When he recovered, his hospital nurse put an ad in a Los Angeles newspaper to try to find the only person he knew, and trusted, in the Southland. My friend Mike indentified this man only as "Whitey" and was close-mouthed about how he came by the tracing of Whitey's map. He did reveal that Whitey was a produce packer foreman constantly on the move as he followed the crops. After the nurse ran the ad, a friend notified Whitey and he went to see the prospector who proved to be an old buddy of Whitey's father. Someone had cashed the poke of gold the old man arrived with and had banked the money (just over \$2300) for him, so he



Search area is circled.

gave a blank check to Whitey, drew a map, and asked him to buy a new car, go recover the cache—and keep the car for his trouble.

By then it was the height of the packing season, the desert was hot, and Whitey already had a new car. So he tore up the check, gave the map back to the prospector, and told him as soon as the desert cooled and work slacked off, he'd take him back to get his gold and ore—and the only charge would be gas.

The next thing Whitey heard about it was from the hospital. The prospector had died and named Whitey his heir. After Whitey paid the bills, there was less than \$100 left, but the map was with the old man's things.

Whitey's search proved fruitless and in *I tried all kinds of combinations. This is seventeen miles south of Indian Spring.*



later years, when detectors were developed, Whitey was put in touch with Mike through the people who manufactured Mike's bug. The two started on one trip, but a car breakdown cancelled it out. They later drifted apart and Mike lost track of Whitey before the next trip jelled—or eluded him, at any rate.

Mike and I planned to have a look, but work always interfered. Just before Mike was taken out of circulation, he came by my house to give me the map, and say he was going on a long trip. I promised to send him a cut if I found it. Mike, however, overestimated his journey. They caught him near Wickenburg, Arizona!

Several years later I happened to meet a packing house boss and he checked around and learned Whitey's last name. When I caught up with him in a Central Valley packing shed, I found out why he was named Whitey. His head, chest and arms were covered with a mat of the curliest jet black hair I've ever seen! To my surprise, he verified everything Mike had told me, except that he was sure the map had said "9 miles west of Indian Spring" instead of "7 miles south." He had found what he thought was the cross of stones about 1½ miles north of Granite Wells. He had hired help and dug a wide ditch on a 45-foot radius all around the marker. All they got out of it was dust and sweat.

When asked if he cared if I looked for it, he laughed and said, "Help yourself. There's plenty of wide open desert to look in!"

He was only partly right. The military had taken over the area from Superior Dry Lake to the Owl Holes (including Indian Spring) for an aerial gunnery range and that part is *still* closed to entry. I have walked or ridden a trail bike over scores of ridges, turned the map every which way, including making a reverse carbon tracing, but haven't found the cache.

The map I got was obviously a tracing and it was worn, folded and wrinkled. Maybe *you* can make some sense out of it. Seven miles south of Indian Spring puts you smack in the middle of Superior Dry Lake—and you can take my word for it, there isn't any marker cross on the ridges 7 or 9 miles west of Indian Springs. The big circular trench that Whitey dug is still plainly visible (IF you can get in) and that much work sure wasn't done for kicks.

I tried every angle I could figure with my system, and drew a blank. Perhaps you can inject some vitamins into your luck. □

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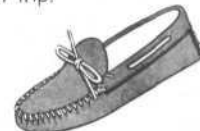
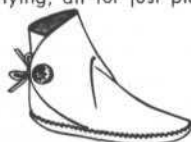
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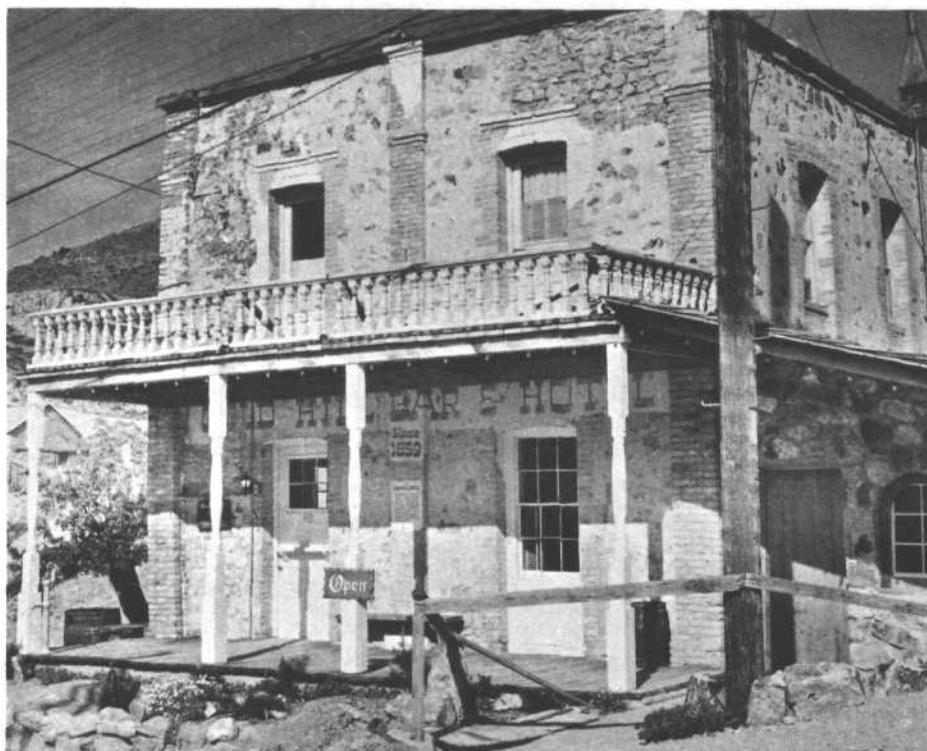
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Goldhill, Nevada

BY LAMBERT FLORIN

A monthly feature by
the author of
Ghost Town Album,
Ghost Town Trails,
Ghost Town Shadows
Ghost Town Treasures
and **Boot Hill**

ASK ANYONE about Virginia City, Nevada, and he'll tell you all about it. But Gold Hill, only a short distance down the canyon, draws a blank. Hardly anyone lives there anymore, but time was when a goodly population resented their town's anonymity and occasionally met in the city hall to discuss the situation. One of these gatherings resulted in a decision to form a separate county. The county seat, predictably, was to be Gold Hill. But nothing ever came of it.

Gold Hill was founded by dissident citizens who claimed taxes in Virginia City were out of proportion to civic improvements. The town's first business building was an eating house erected by Nicholas (Dutch Nick) Ambrosia. Soon both sides of the canyon were lined with shanty structures, later replaced with substantial buildings of lumber, brick and stone.

The first town had been built on the strength of gold, at first the only metal

produced. The gold mines paid well, but work was always impeded by a thick, bluish material that clogged rockers and screens. The miners cursed the stuff. One exception was a Mexican, Old Frank, who had worked in the silver mines of his native land. He kept insisting that the infuriating foreign stuff was ore with "much plata," but no one paid much attention to him—probably not understanding that "plata" is Spanish for silver.

It remained for two scholarly brothers from Pennsylvania to study their books on metallurgy and assay the innocuous material. They then announced that the cursed stuff was worth far more than all the gold on the mountain. It was silver ore assaying as high as \$3500 to the ton.

The brothers, Allen and Hosea Grosch, didn't live to see the subsequent wealth of silver pour from the mines of Virginia City, Gold Hill and Silver City. Working on a silver vein, Hosea cut his foot with a pick and died of blood poisoning. Allen, inconsolable over losing his brother, set out on foot that winter to cross the Sierra. He died in a snowstorm.

One of the first settlers at Gold Hill was Eilley Hunter. Eilley had left Scotland 15 years earlier with a Mormon missionary, Stephen Hunter, who brought her to Utah and later married her. Then came the Mormon revelation on polygamy and Hunter took an additional wife. Eilley wouldn't stand for that. After leaving

Hunter, she married Alexander Cowan and moved to Nevada with the Mormon exodus there. Then, threatened with the approach of U.S. troops, Brigham Young called his faithful back to Salt Lake City. Cowan returned, but his wife remained in Nevada.

Mrs. Cowan, who by this time had become plain "Eilley" opened a boarding house, first at Johntown, then at Gold Hill. One of her first customers was Lemuel S. "Sandy" Bowers. Although 14 years younger than his landlady, Sandy appealed to her so much she allowed him to run up a considerable board bill.

Sandy had two claims across the street from the firehouse. They weren't considered very valuable, but Eilley agreed to accept one as a token payment on his bill. Later, when most claim owners were selling out at ridiculously low prices, Eilley and Sandy clung to theirs. At about this time, silver lode mining got into stride. The twin claims of Sandy and Eilley were among the first to yield hundreds, then thousands of dollars. Soon the pair was wealthy—and married to each other.

Eilley Bowers then yearned to return to Scotland. Not that she was homesick, but when she left her homeland, her people called her a fool. Now she wanted to show them!

Before embarking on a two-year Grand Tour, the couple laid plans for the building of a mansion. During their travels they sent back a steady stream of exotic items to furnish and decorate it—marble mantel-pieces, crystal chandeliers and plush furniture. When they returned, the house was finished—the most lavish of its day, in Nevada.

Wealth and happiness were short lived for Eilley and Sandy, however. Sandy seldom lived at the mansion, preferring the simplicity of his camp at Gold Hill—and its proximity to several saloons, where he threw money right and left. Eilley, down at the foot of the mountain in her empty castle, assuaged her loneliness with excessive spending and risky investments. When Sandy suddenly died in 1868, she found his claims muddled and her flow of wealth at an end. Destitute, she mortgaged the mansion and turned it into a boardinghouse and salon where she told fortunes with a crystal ball she called a "peeping stone." These and other ventures failed, however, and she died in poverty.

The Bowers Mansion still stands beside the Reno—Carson City highway. Although its swimming pool and grounds are open to the public, Bowers Mansion hasn't lost its romantic aura. □

A Lost Corner of Sonora

Continued from page 14

facing a small plaza and adjoining Highway #2 in the center of town. The writer can recall the mission in the days before its restoration, back before Highway #2 was paved. But now the edifice has been plastered over and garishly whitewashed. With luck, the padre may let you into the belltower, but while the view of the sun-scorched desert is spectacular, the illusion is spoiled by the strings of electric lights which illuminate the tower at night, and a neon cross.

Altar, with an acceptable motel, a restaurant or two and perhaps a half dozen cantinas, plus a couple of stores and a gas station, was the end of the journey as far as we were concerned. We had found not one, but two routes out of Sasabe, either of which Arizonans equipped with proper rigs can follow to shortcut their trips to the Gulf of California, its fishing and boating. We had come 83.7 miles from the border at Sasabe within five hours' travel time, or 155.1 miles since we had last seen Highway #2 at Los Tajitos. Time spent logging the roads for our guidebook, checking the names of ranches and the facilities of the towns, the location of water-holes and wells, had caused Bob Thomas, John Lawlor and me to spend three days on the trek, but there is no reason why even the casual traveler could not make it in an easy weekend. The whole circle can be made on a single tankful of gas and if the mode of transportation is a few years old, with rugged tires and adequate ground clearance, the curious wanderer bent on exploring or fishing the Gulf should experience no auto trouble. For the Gulf-bound down from Arizona, either of the routes south out of Sasabe should appear no worse than an extended detour and he's saved himself the bother of going through Nogales, Sonoyta or San Luis. At the same time, he has projected himself back at least a century in time, seen the vestiges of Padre Kino's New World, and mingled with affable, tourist-shy folks who still speak of distances in Spanish leagues instead of kilometers or miles.

Moreover, it's all there; right on Arizona's southern doorstep. ☐

Tempest in Silver

Continued from page 11

"argentiferous" and did not require milling.

The deluge that swept down Surprise Canyon in 1876 was perhaps the final curtain in this historic drama of the old West. Its rushing waters played around empty shacks and deposited layers of heavy silt on little more than dreams. But there was one person enslaved by the charm of the silver city, Jim Bruce. Long after the mines were closed this formidable faro dealer and gunfighter lived a tranquil if uncertain existence in the city he loved.

Panamint flexed feeble muscles of silver again in 1947. On this date Nathan Elliott, movie press agent, established the American Silver Corporation in a last ditch attempt to wrest silver from long dormant Panamint mines. Elliott spun a sumptuous verbal web that entrapped many of the film capitol's finest. Aided by Vice President and Comedian Ben Blue, the silver-tongued promoter succeeded in raising \$1,000,000. With this money Panamint mines were deepened. But Elliott's hopes for a bonanza never materialized. To the wonder and rage of the movie world, the great developer vanished into protective oblivion.

Today Panamint is deserted except for the Thompson sisters who live up Surprise Canyon a few miles north of the old mill. They are old-time residents of the area and their residence, Thompson camp, is a soothing backdrop of green poised against bitter desolation. The Thompson home is encircled by tall trees; a fenced yard secures a well-watered lawn which always has the appearance of being freshly mowed. This is due to the wonderful "automatic mower" owned by these ladies, a dusky well-fed burro.

These soft-spoken daughters of the Mojave own a number of mining claims in the area. From time to time they hire miners to sample ores from neighboring hills or to repair rickety scaffolding. Although, the Thompson sisters run a relaxed operation now, their mining activities would be greatly accelerated by an increase in the price of silver. You can be assured of this not only from what they say, but also from the silvery sparkle that sometimes dances in their eyes. ☐



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Desert COOKERY

Food Editor

Lucille Irene Dale Carlson

CARROT COOKIES (with cooked carrots)

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shortening
- 1 egg
- 1 cup mashed cooked carrots
- 2 cups flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup coconut

Cream sugar and shortening together, add egg and mashed carrots. Sift dry ingredients together and add to carrot mixture. Add vanilla and coconut. Drop by spoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes. Frost with icing made of powdered sugar, grated rind and juice of 1 orange.

GLORIFIED SHORTBREAD

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter or margarine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup unsifted flour

Cream butter and powdered sugar until fluffy. Add flour gradually until well blended. Mixture will be crumbly. Press evenly into an 8 inch square pan. Bake in 350 degree oven for about 20 minutes or until slightly browned.

Filling

- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- 1 package lemon pudding and pie filling mix
- $1\frac{1}{3}$ cups coconut
- 1 cup chopped dates

While crust is baking, beat eggs until thick, then gradually beat in sugar. Add pudding mix and baking powder, mix thoroughly. Add coconut and dates. Spread mixture evenly over hot crust. Return to oven and bake 20 to 30 minutes, until puffed, brown and set. You may cut into bars or squares and top with a scoop of vanilla ice cream as a dessert.

CHOCOLATE DROPS

- 1 can Eagle Brand milk
- 2 squares unsweetened chocolate
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup Quick Quaker Oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts

Put milk and chocolate in double boiler and cook 5 to 8 minutes or until it thickens. Blend in vanilla, Quaker Oats and nuts. Drop on greased cookie sheet, but do not place close together, as they spread. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes and remove at once after taking out of oven.

ALMOND COOKIES

- $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups sifted flour
- $1\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup dairy sour cream
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 teaspoons lemon rind (do not omit this, it gives the flavor)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups slivered almonds

Mix and sift flour, 1 teaspoon of the soda and salt. Combine butter, sugar, sour cream and the remaining $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon of soda in small sauce pan. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Cook slowly on low heat, stirring often for about 10 minutes. Cool to luke warm. Add slightly beaten egg yolks and lemon rind and mix well. Add sifted dry ingredients. Form into small balls, using 1 rounded teaspoon of dough for each cookie. Place about 3 inches apart on ungreased baking sheet. Sprinkle a little sugar on each ball and flatten with bottom of small glass. Sprinkle almonds on each cookie and press lightly. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 325 degrees for about 14 minutes. Cool before removing from cookie sheet.

CARROT COOKIES

- 1 cup grated raw carrots
- 2 cups oatmeal
- 2 cups sifted flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup honey or corn syrup
- 2 eggs well beaten
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter or margarine

Cream butter and honey (or syrup) in mixing bowl. Combine flour, salt, baking powder and soda; sift into butter and honey mixture; beat until blended. Stir in in this order: carrots, oatmeal, nuts, raisins; fold in eggs. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet; bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes.

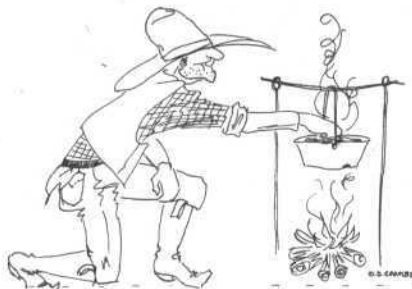
CARROT-MOLASSES COOKIES

- 1 cup sifted flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup nonfat dry milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup shortening
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped dates or raisins

$1\frac{3}{4}$ cups quick cooking rolled oats
Sift together flour, dry milk, soda, baking powder and seasonings. Cream together shortening, sugar and molasses; add egg, then dry ingredients, then grated carrots, lemon rind and dates or raisins. Drop by spoonfuls on well greased cookie sheet and bake in 350 degree oven for about 20 minutes.

Hints for Desert Travelers

by Bruce Barron



TAKE A tip from the "Old Sour-dough" and simplify your camp cooking with "one-pot meals." An unruly campfire or an old two-burner Coleman stove can hardly yield the competition of tea kettle, coffee pot, frying pan and stew pot, especially when evening shadows are beginning to fall and rigors of desert exploration have honed appetites to a keen edge. A little advance menu planning, some pre-cooking in the convenience of your home kitchen, and use of a freezer will give you generous rewards later.

Yes, you can pre-cook the majority of your meals at home, even for an extended outing. Some easy "single potters" are Goulash, Chili Con Carne, Meat Loaf, Casserole Ham Hocks and Lima Beans, Stuffed Cabbage Rolls, and that old standby, Stew. Portion the amounts needed for individual meals and freeze in plastic freezer containers or empty milk cartons. If time doesn't permit these home pre-

parations, how about trying some of those pre-cooked frozen dinners available at the supermarket? File these goodies in your ice chest and you will be amazed at how they help conserve your ice supply. Choral Pepper's *Cooking and Camping on the Desert* has some excellent ideas on preparing camp meals and on how to increase the efficiency of your ice chest by supplementing with dry ice.

Some traditional combinations utilizing canned goods are: wieners and sauerkraut; meat balls and spaghetti; corned beef and cabbage; and other combinations of Chinese and Mexican foods.

Here's a winner to go with that favorite stew recipe. When pre-cooking, eliminate potatoes (they don't freeze well). Instead, after thoroughly reheating, add *dumplings* made in accordance with instructions on biscuit-mix package. Dumplings make a tasty substitute for both bread and potatoes! □



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C-BAR-H GUEST Ranch—Rest or Play—a real western holiday. American plan includes three delicious meals each day, horseback riding, comfortable cottages, swimming pool, ranch lodge activities, hay rides, sports galore. P.O. Box 373D, Lucerne Valley, Calif. Area Code 714, CH 8-7666.

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★ Mail your copy and first-insertion remittance to: Trading Post, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, California 92260. Classified rates are 25c per word, \$5 minimum per insertion.

DEADLINE FOR CLASSIFIED ADS IS 10TH OF SECOND MONTH PRECEDING COVER DATE.

• EQUIPMENT - SUPPLIES

PAN GOLD, 75 California locations—\$1. Authentic leather dust poke—\$1.50. Pans small—\$3.00, large—\$3.75. Postpaid. H. Walker, Box 606, Oak View, Calif. 93022.

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POCKET GOLD, \$2. Placer gold, \$2. Gold dust, \$1. Attractively displayed. Postpaid. Money-back guarantee. Lester Lea, Box 1125D, Mt. Shasta, California.

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LEARN OIL painting by mail. Also casein or acrylic. Amateur, advanced. Easy, fascinating, naturalistic. Easy payments. Art, Box 486, Montrose, Colorado.

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FINE RESERVATION-MADE Navajo, Zuni, Hopi jewelry. Large selection of old pawn and Kachina dolls now in stock. Many fine old baskets, moderately priced, in excellent condition Navajo rugs, Yei blankets, Chimayo blankets, pottery. A collector's paradise! Open daily 10 to 5:30, closed Mondays. Buffalo Trading Post, Highway 18, Apple Valley, California.

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WANTED: OLD Indian basket collections in good condition. Indian Baskets of Tucson, 2225 East Blackledge Drive, Tucson, Arizona.

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AUTHENTIC INDIAN jewelry, Navajo rugs, Chimayo blankets, squaw boots. Collector's items. Closed Tuesdays. Pow-Wow Indian Trading Post, 19967 Ventura Blvd., East Woodland Hills, Calif. Open Sundays.

• JEWELRY

ROCK JEWELRY and semi-precious gems pamphlet 10c. V. S. Gordon Jewelry & Findings Co., 9210 North 7th Avenue, Lane A-11, Phoenix, Arizona 85021.

• MAPS

SECTIONIZED COUNTY maps — San Bernardino \$3; Riverside \$1; Imperial, small \$1, large \$2; San Diego \$1.25; Inyo \$2.50; Kern \$1.25, other California counties \$1.25 each. Nevada counties \$1 each. Include 4 percent sales tax. Topographic maps of all mapped western areas. Westwide Maps Co., 114 West Third Street, Los Angeles 13, California.

OREGON BOOMS and busts map now available. Complete showing of ghost towns on either folded field map \$1.00 or parchment suitable for mounting \$2.00. White's Electronics, Inc., Sweet Home, Oregon 97386.

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UTAH ASSAYING Co., gold and silver specialists. Gold, silver, lead, copper: 1.50 each. Spectrographs \$5 each. 172 North 9th West, Salt Lake City, Utah 84116.

WEEKEND PROSPECTORS! Kits for 8-foot sluice box, portable, knocks down to 1 x 1/2 x 3 feet, comes with pan and operating instructions, \$19.95. Dry washes, complete, \$59.95. Plans and instructions only for sluice box kits, \$2.00. Complete map of gold bearing areas for placer mining in California, \$1.00. Prospector's Supply Company, P. O. Box 1342, Canoga Park, California.

ASSAYS. COMPLETE, accurate, guaranteed. Highest quality spectrographic. Only \$5.00 per sample. Reed Engineering, 620-R So. Inglewood Ave., Inglewood, California.

• OLD COINS, STAMPS

DOLLARS—1878 CC Mint \$3.50, very good. 1878-79-80-81-82 S. Mint, 1883-84-\$5-99-1900-01-04 O Mint uncirculated \$3 each. 100 page catalog, Coins, 50c. Shultz, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.

• PHOTO SUPPLIES

CUSTOM FILM finishing by mail since 1932. Morgan Camera Shop "The complete photographic store," 6262 Sunset Blvd., Hollywood, California 90028.

• PLANTS, SEEDS

CHIA SEED, with story: 12 ounces, \$1.50; 3 1/2 pound \$5.00; 18 pound \$21.00. Pollen Chia Commerce, Box 2151D, Prescott, Arizona.

RANCHO ENVIRONMENTAL EMPHASIS: An arboretum nursery with hi-speed hi-desert native trees. Twentynine Palms. (Call 367-6124 for directions.

CACTUS PLANTS from the Southwest, in assortments of 5 and 10 different varieties. Five plants—\$1. Ten plants—\$2. Postpaid in U.S.A. Cactus, 2528 E. Madison, Phoenix, Arizona 85034.

EL RANCHO Galapagos Cactus Growers. You are invited to visit our greenhouses and cactus gardens on the east slope of Copper Mountain. Star Route 1, Box 710, Twentynine Palms, California. Phone 362-4329.

• REAL ESTATE

400,000,000 ACRES government public land in 25 states. Some low as \$1.00 acre, 1967 report. Details \$1.00. Public Land, 422DM Washington Building, Washington, D.C.

40 ACRES in Newberry, Calif. The land of lakes. Total price \$2950. Raw land \$100 down, \$35 per month. Owner, Box 304, Hesperia, Calif. 92345.

• TREASURE FINDERS

LOOKING FOR treasure: Complete detailed circuit information to build low-cost transistor metal locator and small detector, two circuits \$2. Treasure Hunter, Box 1796, Costa Mesa, Calif.

BUILD YOUR OWN commercial type detector. Find buried treasure, gold, silver, coins. Sensitive four transistor circuit with speaker. Easy picture-illustrated instructions, schematic, parts list, \$5.00 prepaid. Janeston Electronics, Box A, Blanchard, Oklahoma 73010.

FIND LOST or hidden treasures with new transistor metal detector, underwater metal detectors, scintillation counters, etc. Free literature. Gardiner Electronics, Dept. 51, 4729 North 7th Ave., Phoenix, Arizona.

FIND BURIED coins, treasures, relics. New super-sensitive, low-priced detectors for land or underwater use. Free information. Sensitronix, 2225-L Lou Ellen, Houston, Texas 77018.

PROVEN SENSITIVE M-Scopes locate coins, relics, gold, silver, etc. Guaranteed. Terms. Free fascinating booklet. Fisher Research, Dept. DM7, Palo Alto, Calif. 94302.

POWERFUL METROTECH locators detect gold, silver, coins, relics. Moneyback guarantee. Terms free information. Underground Explorations, Dept. 3A, Box 793, Menlo Park, California.

NEW TRANSISTOR instrument detects buried coins, firearms, treasures, gold, silver. \$19.95, up. Free catalog. Relco A-18, Box 10563, Houston 18, Texas.

• TREASURE FINDERS

TREASURE-METAL and mineral locators. Free 24 page booklet. GeoFinder Co., Box 37, Lakewood, Calif. 90714.

NEW 1966 Goldak treasure, coin, gold, silver locators. Goldak, Dept. DMC, 1544 W. Glenoaks, Glendale, Calif. 91201.

• WESTERN GOODS

GHOST TOWN items: Sun-colored glass, amethyst to royal purple; ghost railroads materials, tickets; limited odd items from camps of the '60s. Write your interest—Box 64-D, Smith, Nevada.

• MISCELLANEOUS

PURPLE BOTTLE? Instructions for purpling glass indoors, much faster than sunlight—no danger of breakage. \$1.00. Ann Brown, 6233 Warwood Road, Lakewood, Calif. 90713.

TWO "WILL" Forms (finest quality) and lawyer's 64 page booklet about "Wills"—complete, \$1.00. National Forms, Box 48313-DS, Los Angeles 48, California.

FINALLY! A vacation planning and buying index. Vacation Source Guide. Nearly 600 verified and approved addresses for free or inexpensive camp guides, maps, brochures, etc. National Forest Parks, every State and Province. Well-known companies supplying outdoor vacationing needs; camping, trailering, fishing, hiking, etc. \$2.50. Campers' Service, Dept. D, Box 1566, Vancouver, Washington 98663.



"WHY ARE YOU MOVING GRANDPA'S PORTRAIT?"

BACK COUNTRY

OUT OF THIS WORLD!

Organized outings and meetings of 4-wheel drive, camper, trailer and gem and mineral and boating clubs in the 11 western states will be listed every month in this column. Be certain to include the following information: complete name of organization, place, hour and day or days, how to get there, and if restricted to members or open to everyone. Send information as soon as meeting has been definitely scheduled. INFORMATION MUST BE RECEIVED AT LEAST SIX WEEKS PRIOR TO EVENT. Send material to Out of This World, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, California 92260.

TIERRA DEL SOL 4WD CLUB OF SAN DIEGO. Feb. 25-26, 1967. Fifth Annual Two Day "Desert Safari" in Borrego (San Diego County) Badlands. All 4-wheelers invited. For information write Tierra Del Sol Club, 5083 Conrad Ave., San Diego, Calif. 92117.

AVION TRAVELCADE CLUB. Feb. 6 through March 23, tentative dates for Eastern Mexico Travelcade and February 13 through March 11, Western Mexico Sports Tour.

VENTURA GEM & MINERAL SOCIETY. March 4 & 5, Ventura County Fair Grounds, Seaside Park, Ventura, Calif. Admission free. Camping facilities available.

CA of 4WD 7th ANNUAL GENERAL ELECTION DINNER-DANCE MEETING. Feb. 4-5. For details write CA of 4WD, P. O. Box 5001, Sacramento, Calif.

NATIONAL 4WD GRAND PRIX, Riverside, Calif. March. For details write N4WD Grand Prix, P. O. Box 301, Fullerton, Calif.

PHOENIX JEEP CLUB JAMBOREE, Phoenix, Arizona. April.

INDIO SIDEWINDER 4WD CRUISE, May 6-7. A family 4WD event open to the public where four wheel drive enthusiasts are led on a cross country trip. See Erle Stanley Gardner's "The Desert Is Yours" for description. For complete information write to Sareea Al Jamel 4WD Club, P. O. Box 526, Indio, Calif. 92201.

VENTURA GEM AND MINERAL SHOW, March 4 and 5, opening at 10 A.M., Ventura Fair Grounds, Seaside Park, Ventura, Calif. In addition to rock, gem and mineral displays and rock dealers there will be antique bottle displays and a bottle dealer.

What's New?

By Jack Pepper

For Baja *aficionados* there is now a new status symbol in the form of a car badge that attaches to the front or back of your vehicle. Made of steel with a green and white map of Baja the handsome plate is sold by Dick Cepek, a veteran Baja traveler. Send for his brochure to Box 181, South Gate, California 90280 or we have them at Desert Magazine.

Another important item for campers now available at Desert Magazine is the revolutionary NCR Space Blanket. The blanket only weighs 12 ounces, but will keep you as warm as a heavy quilt. Based on a super insulation proved in outer space missions, the blanket is waterproof, wind proof, has grommets and is 84 X 56 inches. I have used one for several months and would not camp without it. Retail for \$7.95 plus 32 cents California tax and 25 cents mailing charges. We have them here at Desert Magazine.

For driver of pickups and campers the "Pik-Pocket" takes care of the problem of where to put all the miscellaneous items you usually throw on dashboards. Made of sturdy canvas it fits between the tilt seat and the frame of your pickup. When you tilt the seat forward it makes a V-shaped carryall with sections for maps, fishing rods, rifles or whatever. It retails for \$9.95 plus 40 cents California tax and 25 cents mailing charges . . . or stop by Desert Magazine and see the one on my Ford camper.

Want to pan gold? An informative book "How and Where to Pan Gold" plus a gold pan is all you need. And we have both at Desert Magazine. The gold pan sells for \$1.17 and the paperback book for \$2.00. In case you order add 4 percent sales tax and a total of 25 cents for mailing.



TRAVEL

Desert's New Section

This new Back Country Travel section, which started in last month's issue, will become a popular feature according to first comments received. A few are in Sound Off. The new section is designed as a clearing house for exchange of ideas and information for the thousands of people who have discovered, and the thousands more who will someday discover the thrill of back country travel.

Along with the new magazine section we are establishing a Back Country Travel Center at the Desert Magazine in Palm Desert. Travel information and where and how to get to places will be furnished to readers who drop in for a jam session.

In addition we are stocking unusual items which will make back country travel and camping easier. (See What's New). These items will be in addition to our complete and selective books on the West. So the next time you are in Palm Desert (on Highway 111 midway between Palm Springs and Indio) come on in and just browse around.

Sound Off!

Do you have any information you want to share with other Back Country Travelers? Do you have any questions about how or where to obtain an item, how to get somewhere, condition of terrain, is a certain area restricted? Then write to SOUND OFF. Share your useful—or even useless—discoveries with others. Please do NOT send letters containing extremely technical information such as detailed data on engines, engine conversion, etc. which belongs more in motor and technical publications. However, helpful and easy instructions on mechanical improvements which the average layman could do in his garage are welcome. Address letters to SOUND OFF, Desert Magazine, Palm Desert, Calif. 92260.

Dear Jack,

Just received the January issue. I like the Back Country Travel section. You may have something there. Of course, you'll want to add a Scout with a camper yet!

Florence and "Barney Barnes,
Costa Mesa, Calif.

Florence and Barney have one of the best equipped campers on a 4WD I have ever seen. Needless to say, it's a Scout.

Dear Jack,

Your new section has a lot of possibilities . . . not only for us who already know the fun of having a 4WD, but to show desert travellers who do not know just what they are missing. If it ever came to the point where I would have to decide whether to give up my TV set and passenger car or my Jeep I'd keep the Jeep, and what's more, my wife agrees!

Bill Knyvett,
Indio, California.

Dear Jack,

Congratulations on the new section. It's something I have missed in your otherwise fine magazine.

Dick Cepek,
South Gate, California.



"GET READY TO MOVE AGAIN — THE NEW INTERSTATE SUPER HIGHWAY IS COMING RIGHT THROUGH HERE."



LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Letters requesting answers must include stamped self-addressed envelope

DESERT Appreciated at Harvard . . .

To the Editor: We have been reading with interest your series on the *Magic of Baja* (June-Dec. '66) as well as the previous series you did on this fascinating country (May-Sept. '64). As you know, we have been building up a reference library of petroglyphs for the Museum and would like to have your Baja collection represented. The DESERT Magazine is always fascinating.

DONALD SCOTT,
Peabody Museum
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

La Paz, No? . . .

To the Editor: I'd like to point out a slight mistake in regard to Jack Delaney's article about La Paz. The ruins photographed are not the ruins of the old town. Rather, they show the Golden Belt mill, one of many which served the area. The real ruins of La Paz may be seen some distance from the Golden Belt mill, on the other side of the highway. I have photos of them in my book *Outlaws, Heroes and Jokers of the Old Southwest*.

PETER ODENS,
El Centro, California.

House of Cans . . .

To the Editor: Re your story "Reedy's Lost Chicago Mine" in the Jan. '67 issue, I think the house made of empty cans and the underground bedroom were probably used as a railroad camp. I have also found a dump to the southeast that contains hundreds of old cans and bones. It would have taken more than a few men to make a dump of that size. When I was last through there, the old Dos Cabezas station was no longer standing. It has been torn to the ground. I have spent many a windy and stormy night there and was sad to see it go. I think vandals did most of the damage.

ERNIE COWAN,
Vista, California.

More on Scotty . . .

To the Editor: Your Nov. '66 story about Death Valley Scotty reminded me of an experience I had with him that led to the use of the evaporative coolers now used in cars in desert areas. For many years I had a land office in Lancaster. Scotty, on his trips to and from the valley, would have his car serviced nearby and then come and shoot the breeze with me. I might add that he furnished most of the breeze. Our common interest was that we each owned that modern ship of the desert—an air cooled Franklin automobile.

One hot day he invited me to share with him his "cooling system." These sedans had a split windshield and I noticed that the top of his was open. As we drove around town a delightful cool breeze hit me from all directions, but stopped when he again parked at my office. He asked me to look around. There on the floor of the back seat was an elongated wash tub half full of ice and beer bottles and covered with a bunch of wet burlap sacks. Scotty was a smart old coot as he attacked his heat business on two fronts—outside and inside too! This same setup carried me pleasantly across the hot desert sands and—to my best recollection it was two years at least before, with much regret, I replaced it with a new-fangled modern auto cooler.

FRANK B. RUTLEDGE,
San Clemente, California.

Ghost Towns Alight . . .

To the Editor: Christmas lighted mining towns (Madrid, N.M., DESERT, Dec. 1966) are not entirely extinct. One of my warmest memories is from 1961 when Christmas was celebrated with lights on the Comstock Lode. Behind the prominent "pink Victorian" mansion in Gold Hill, two fat pinions on Twin Peaks were covered with lights, while on one peak, a large cross, probably made from telephone poles, was lit. This sometimes shines at Easter. Further down the canyon at the Dayton Consolidated Mines (actually in Silver City), the huge bull wheel at the top of the mine headframe was outlined in colored lights. It doesn't sound like much, but in the cold, sometimes desolate snow of these desert mountains, it cheered the dark night.

JAMES C. MARTIN,
Carson City, Nevada.



Save the Mushroom! . . .

To the Editor: The photos the author used with the *On the Rocks* photo story in the Dec. '66 issue were good historical photos, but you might like to see how Mushroom Rock looks today. It is alongside a paved road, now. The pedestal base is almost knife-edge thin and probably the rock won't stand much longer. The above photo was taken in 1960. It is even thinner today. We think a high protective fence should surround it to save it from vandalism, as it is so fragile.

H. G. GILLETTE,
Rosemead, California.

Editor's Comment: If the Mushroom has stood this long without being vandalized, it will probably live out its life. Our own policy is against fences. We feel fences and signs are on a par with vandalism . . . they certainly don't add anything to natural beauty. The most effective way to prevent vandalism is by education, not by putting conservation on a pulpit, nor by keeping people away from nature. In DESERT we go about this by giving readers an enticing goal when they go to the back country, but at the same time adding a dash of history, lore, and enthusiasm for areas where there is no regimentation and they are on their own. It doesn't always happen on the first trip, but once a reader becomes "hooked" on this way of life, he appreciates it so much that he doesn't want to destroy nor contaminate. The only people who listen to lectures on Conservation are the people who don't need them. We deal with the public every day of the year in our approach to this problem and unless we're going to have the whole country tied up in regimented parks where you have to camp with mobs of people and only explore the well-beaten paths, we're all going to have to further the effort of making back-country travel and camping an exciting escape from the superficialities of living and worth preserving. C.P.

Yellow Crosses in Baja . . .

To the Editor: Your account of the visit to Gardner Cave brought back fond memories I did mention the yellow crosses, however, in a technical paper for *American Antiquity* on the Baja cave paintings. I did not mention them in the DESERT Magazine because I do not believe they belong in the same period with the other paintings. They are painted on a clean rock surface where the original surface had flaked away, and there is no soot nor staining in the same area. The critical question, of course, is how much later were they done? I felt the crosses were a late addition by a Spanish padre, putting up his own Christian symbols to remove the hex of the "works of the devil." I also believed some time had elapsed between the abandonment of the site and the painting of the crosses, mainly on Clavijero's word that the recent Indians denied all knowledge of the paintings and said they were old.

This is one of those fascinating problems and deserves more study. Our present knowledge is less than adequate. I'm not convinced yet that the paintings were made at the time the Spanish were entering the area, but when we get more facts, it might well turn out to be the case. I am delighted to see your continued discussion of the paintings and hope you will keep up the good work.

CLEMENT MEIGHAN,
University of California
Los Angeles.

Editor's comment: That doesn't explain the yellow doe, though, does it? C.P.

More on the Magic . . .

To the Editor: In your last article on *The Magic of Baja* (a series that I have greatly enjoyed), your climb to Pepper Cave reminded me of the scramble up the Cara Pintada cliff. I was interested in the business of the building of the ship by Padre Ugarte of the wood from *Populus brandegeei*. Too bad you did not get to see some of these. I saw a small stand in the Sierra Victoria (between La Paz and the Cape) several years ago when we were collecting oak specimens and it is the noblest tree on the peninsula—very tall and of tremendous girth. I could be wrong but I think it is the largest of the North American cottonwoods. I will have a book out in the spring that should interest you—*Rock Art of the American Indian*—to be published by T. Y. Crowell.

CAMPBELL GRANT,
Carpenteria, California.

Creosote Picking . . .

To the Editor: I found the article on Creosote picking interesting, but would like information as how to contact the William Strange Company's Imperial Valley Plant.

HARRY CONWAY,
Quartzsite, Arizona.

Editor's Comment: Helen Brown, the author of the article, has written that W. B. (Bill) Carsen is in charge of the buying of the bush tips for the Strange Company. His address is Niland, California, and she says he has a number of regular pickers so it is better to contact him in person than to write. The Niland Post-office can tell you where to locate him. C.P.

NATIONAL DATE FESTIVAL

A FLYING CARPET would be the appropriate mode of transportation but a car, plane, camper or travel trailer will do when you visit Riverside County's famed National Date Festival which will run at Indio Feb. 17 through 26.

By taking its theme from the tantalizing tales told by Scheherazade the National Date Festival has grown from a modest county fair into one of the nation's most unusual expositions.

The usual theme, which is characterized in many ways, recognizes the origin of dates from the nations of the Near East. Dates were introduced to the California desert around the turn of the Century as a part of a United States Department of Agriculture effort to diversify the nation's agriculture.

Commercial date production for the Western Hemisphere is almost exclusive to the 50-mile area from Palm Springs to the Salton Sea and centers in Indio. The National Date Festival heralds a \$10-million annual harvest.

Most spectacular feature of the National Date Festival is the colorful Arabian Nights Pageant which is presented free each evening from a mammoth stage fashioned after an ancient Arabian Village.

Beautiful costuming and lighting created for the Arabian Nights Pageant, help to enhance the performance of some 150 amateur singers and dancers in the musical extravaganza. Queen Scheherazade, a living counterpart to the legendary beauty and wit of old Baghdad, reigns over the National Date Festival with nine lovely princesses in the Queen Scheherazade Court of Beauty.

Comical camel and ostrich races are staged daily with the National Horse Show which is one of the nation's leading equestrian events. A large and diverse gem and mineral show, showings of desert paintings in the fine arts department and a varied collection of desert dry arrangements in the floriculture section are other attractions.



Arabian Nights Pageant is presented free each night.

Dates and citrus are shown in displays which use such themes as: Aladdin's Lamp, Sinbad's Ship, Genies, flying carpets and other motifs from the delightful Arabain Nights fantasies.

For all of its romantic and exciting reproduction of fabled old Arabia, the National Date Festival retains the traditional features of a county fair, including a large Junior Fair and Livestock Show. A costumed street parade through downtown Indio highlights Date Festival activities on George Washington's Birthday.

National Date Festival grounds are on Highway 111 in Indio, about 125 miles from downtown Los Angeles, central San Fernando Valley and most of Orange Couty. These areas are connected to Indio by all-freeway routes. About 10 miles east of Banning State Highway 111 intersects with Interstate 10 giving motorists the option of continuing on the freeway or taking Highway 111 as a more leisurely and scenic route through Palm Springs.

San Diego is about 180 miles from Indio. Closest route is Highway 395 to Highway 71 near Temecula and east on 71 to the famed Pines-to-Palms Road which runs through picturesque mountain country before dropping to the desert floor at Palm Desert about 12 miles west of Indio on Highway 111. An optional route to avoid mountain driving is 395 to Riverside where Interstate 10 can be picked up.

It should be borne in mind that daytime temperatures at Indio will range up to the high 80s but it normally starts cooling about 5 p.m. and wraps are desirable for viewing the Arabian Nights Pageant.

Overnight accommodations are at a premium in and around Indio during the National Date Festival so reservations should be made as early as possible. Listings of hotels, motels and trailer parks taking overnight guests are available through the Indio Chamber of Commerce, Arabia St. and Highway 111, Indio, California 92201.



Desert's Book and Gift Shop



Come in and Browse . . .

WHEN IN PALM DESERT VISIT OUR BOOK AND GIFT SHOP IN THE DESERT MAGAZINE BUILDING, JUST ONE BLOCK SOUTH OF HIGHWAY 111, ON LANTANA AND LARREA STREETS. COME IN AND BROWSE AND SEE OUR COLLECTION OF WESTERN ARTIFACTS. IF YOU NEED INFORMATION ABOUT HIGHWAY OR BACK COUNTRY TRAVEL WE'LL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU AND SHOW YOU INTERESTING PLACES TO GO. LOOK FOR THE CORAL BUILDING ACROSS FROM THE POST OFFICE.



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